

THE LIFE
OF
SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

THE
LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
SIR WILLIAM WALLACE,
THE
LIBERATOR OF SCOTLAND.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Birth, Parentage, and early Exploits 9

CHAPTER II.

Claim of Edward to Feudal Homage. Accession of Balliol. Siege of
Berwick. Battle of Dunbar 20

CHAPTER III.

Wallace retires to the Woods. Organizes a System of Warfare.
Annoys the English in their Quarters. Contest at Beg. Dress
and Armour of Wallace. Anecdote 48

CHAPTER IV.

Stirling taken and demolished by Wallace. The family of
the oppressed by the English. Wallace's uncle summoned
to Glasgow. Wallace captures the baggage of Percy. Various
skirmishes with the English. Wallace slays one of his followers . 58

CHAPTER V.

Wallace's Reflections. Singular Adventure in Gask Castle. Kills
John Butler. Miraculous Escape. Interview with his
brother's Brother. Skirmishes with the English 72

CHAPTER VI.

Wallace burns Crawford Castle. Returns to Lanark. Murder of the Heiress of Lamington. Wallace revenges her Death. The Barns of Ayr. Defeat of the Bishop of Durham 86

CHAPTER VII.

Wallace surprises Ormesby, the English Justiciary. Is joined by a number of Barons. Expedition to the West Highlands. Battle of Brandir, and death of MacI'aduan, the Irish Chieftain 101

CHAPTER VIII.

Robert Bruce joins Wallace. Percy and Clifford sent to quell the Rebellion. Night-Skirmish. Disaffection of the Scottish Nobles. They desert Wallace, who retires to the North. Battle of Stirling . 109

CHAPTER IX.

Wallace invades England. Dreadful Devastations committed by the Scots. Wallace chosen Governor of the kingdom. Discontent of the Scottish nobles 127

CHAPTER X.

Preparations of the English for Invading Scotland. Description of the English Army. Wallace's Plan for the Campaign. Edward invades Scotland. Extraordinary state in which he finds it. Advances to Templeliston. Famine in the English Army. Edward compelled to issue orders for a Retreat. Treachery of the Earls of Dunbar and Angus 147

CHAPTER XI.

March of the English Army. Battle of Falkirk. Treachery of Comyn. Accounts of the Battle by English and Scottish Writers . 157

CHAPTER XII.

Wallace retreats after the Battle of Falkirk. The Scots burn Stirling and Perth. Edward is compelled to retreat. Wallace resigns the office of Governor 1

CHAPTER XIII.

Conduct of Wallace after his demission. Various exploits. Baliol delivered to the Pope. Negotiations thereanent. Edward again invades Scotland. Siege of Caerlaverock. Occurrences during the siege 186

CHAPTER XIV.

The Pope claims Scotland as belonging to the Church of Rome. Edward's indignation. English advance to Irvine. A Truce. Wallace visits France. Attacked by a French Pirate. Thomas de Longueville, the Red Reiver. Edward again invades Scotland. Wallace returns Home. Defeat of the English at Roslin 202

CHAPTER XV.

Wallace again visits France. Encounters an English Pirate. Edward invades Scotland. His desolating progress. Submission of Comyn the Governor. Wallace returns to Scotland. Conflicts with the English 217

CHAPTER XVI.

Edward's policy respecting the settlement of Scotland. Endeavours to gain Wallace to his interest. Siege and Reduction of Stirling Castle. Edward's severity. Haliburton undertakes to betray Wallace and is killed 231

CHAPTER XVII.

Discontent of the nobility of Scotland. State of the Country. Bruce invited to take the crown. Conduct of Comyn towards Bruce. Wallace betrayed by Sir John Monteith 242

CHAPTER XVIII.

Trial and Execution of Wallace. His Character 256

CHAPTER XIX.

Conclusion 269

x
r

CONTENTS.

NOTES.

Wallace's Tree, Torwood	282
Wallace's Expedition to the West Highlands	285
Treachery of Monteith	295



THE LIFE OF

SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

CHAPTER I.

Birth, Parentage, and early Exploits of Wallace.

WILLIAM WALLACE appears to have been born about the middle of the reign of Alexander III., but the exact year of his birth is not satisfactorily ascertained. He was descended from a respectable family in the West of Scotland. He was the second son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Ellerslie, near Paisley; and his mother appears to have been a sister of Sir Reginald Crawford, Sheriff of Ayr. The exact period when the ancestors of Wallace first settled in Scotland, is a matter of uncertainty, and has puzzled historians and genealogists. It is, however, very probable, that they were originally from Normandy; and those who support this opinion, mention one Eimerus Galleus, as the immediate progenitor of the Scottish family of Wallace. This person appears as a witness to the charter of the Abbey of Kelso, founded by David I., about the year 1128, and is supposed to have been the father of Richard Wallace, one of the witnesses to the charter of the Abbey of Paisley, founded in 1160, by Walter, High Steward of Scotland. From the Steward, Richard received a grant of a considerable portion of land in the district of Kyle, which he named Richardtown, after himself. This Richard, who was the most powerful vassal of the Stewards in Kyle, granted to the Monks of Melrose, the lands of Barmonand Godeneth,

with their pertinents; and this grant was 'confirmed' by the second Walter the Steward. Richard was succeeded by his eldest son, also named Richard, who appeared to have altered or softened down the name to Walays. Respecting this last person, no particulars have been related, except that he was contemporary with Alan, the High Steward, who died about 1204. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Henry Walays, who acquired some lands under the Steward in Renfrewshire, early in the thirteenth century; which lands descended by inheritance to Adam Walays, who is said to have been living in 1259, and to have had two sons Adam and Malcolm. Adam being the eldest, succeeded to the estate of Richardtown. Malcolm, the father of our hero, received the lands of Ellerslie, and married, as we have already stated, the sister of the sheriff of Ayr, by whom he had two sons, Malcolm and William. His eldest brother is said, by some, to have been killed along with his father, in a skirmish with the English; but this statement seems at variance with Wynton's couplet,

“Hys eldare Brodyre the herytage,
Had, and joysyd in his dayis.”

From which it appears that the elder brother outlived the father, since he succeeded to the heritage; and though he may have fallen by the hands of the English, it must have been in some skirmish subsequent to the death of his father.

Sir William, the subject of our narrative, the precise year of whose birth has not been ascertained, as it is not mentioned in any record known to exist. It is usual, however, for historians to commence his history in 1297, as if he had then for the first time burst forth upon the notice of his countrymen, though they are represented by the same historians as being already prepared to place implicit confidence in his talents as a leader, without any explanation of his previous deeds to merit the honourable distinction. In the *Preface* to one edition of “Blind Harry,” he is stated to have been about twenty-seven years of age at the time of his execution. This however, would imply a precocity of nature and strength, and a maturity of judgment too miraculous not to be dwelt on at greater length by those early writers who have

handed down his history. If he was twenty-seven in 1305, he would consequently be only nineteen in 1297. And no one can suppose for a moment, that a youth of that age, without influence, and without fame, would have been able to persuade men, his superiors in birth, years, and experience, to array themselves under his banner, and submit to his control. In the *work* of the Minstrel, we are told,

• • “Fourty and five off age, Wallace was cauld,
 That tym that he was to Southeron sauld.”

As this, however, is different from what is mentioned elsewhere in the same work, it is probably an error of the transcriber, who may have mistaken “thirtie” for “Fourty,” as we find it is stated in the first book that “Scotland was lost quhen he was bot a child.” The term child here made use of, is not to be considered as inferring that degree of infancy usually understood in our day, but a youth acting or able to act, as page or squire to some feudal superior. That this is the Minstrel’s meaning is evident from the following lines: •

“Yhet he was then semly, stark, and bald;
And he of age was bot auchtene ycr auld,”

an age inconsistent with his being forty-five at the time of his death. If we are to suppose that Blind Harry dated the loss of Scotland from the solemn surrender of the kingdom, and all its fortifications, to Edward, on the 11th of June, 1291, it will nearly correspond with the correction now offered; and if his words are to be taken in the strict literal sense, that he was thirty-five years of age on the day he was betrayed to the English, it will follow that he was born on the 5th of August, 1270. Wynton, who first introduces him to notice in the spring of 1297, says, that he had already distinguished himself in such a manner as to have excited the envy and animosity of the English soldiers. In accordance with the above date, Wallace would then be in his twenty-seventh year; which, considering that there was no open rupture to call forth the fiery spirits of the age till 1296, was allowing him no more than a reasonable time for spread-

ing his fame among the English garrisons stationed in Scotland.

His early years are said to have been passed chiefly under the superintendence of his uncle, a wealthy ecclesiastic, who was settled at Dunipace, near Stirling, from whom he received the first rudiments of his education. This worthy man had been at great pains in storing his mind with the choicest sayings to be found in the Latin classics, particularly those where the love of liberty is recommended; and the efforts of the teacher, who appears to have been animated with the strongest feelings of independence, were amply rewarded by the love of country excited in the breast of the pupil. How long he remained at Dunipace, is uncertain; but, he appears to have been at Ellerslie in 1291, when the order for an universal homage of the people of Scotland was issued by Edward I., in his assumed character of lord paramount. Lord Hailes says, "All who came were admitted to swear fealty. They who came and refused, were to be arrested until performance; they who came not, but sent excuses, to have the validity of their excuses tried in the next parliament; they who neither came nor sent excuses to be committed to close custody." The family of Ellerslie appears to have been amongst the last class of recusants. Sir Malcolm, setting all the penalties of non-conformity at defiance, resolutely refused to take an oath so subversive of the independence of his country. Aware, however, that the strength of his fortalice at Ellerslie was insufficient to protect him against the consequences of his refusal, he retired with his eldest son to the fastnesses of the Lennox; while William, along with his mother, sought the protection of a powerful relation at Kilspindie, a small village in the rich district of the Carse of Gowrie; and from this latter place he was sent to the seminary attached to the cathedral of Dundee, where he received such instruction as the limited education of those rude times could afford him. It was here that Wallace became first acquainted with John Blair, who was afterwards a Benedictine monk, a young man about his own age, and the two youths formed a lasting attachment to each other. When he became celebrated for his heroism, Wallace chose his early friend for his chaplain: and, it is a subject of deep regret that a Latin life of his

patron; which was written by Blair, has, with the exception of a few fragments, been lost or destroyed.

With this faithful companion, and other youths of similar dispositions, Wallace used to lament over the degradation to which his country was daily subjected; and fired with indignation at the growing insolence of the English soldiers, he formed an association among his fellow students for the purpose of defending themselves, and restraining the wanton outrages of the intruders, by chastising their aggressions whenever the parties were to be found in convenient situations. This, from the licentious habits of the soldiery, frequently occurred; and seldom were they allowed to escape without experiencing the effects of their vengeance.

In these juvenile exploits, too unimportant to attract the notice of those in authority, Wallace had frequent opportunities of displaying that dexterity and strength, with which nature had so amply endowed him. In him his companions found united all the qualifications they could desire in a leader—a head to devise and a hand to execute the most daring enterprises—a fertile imagination ever teeming with stratagems—and a prudence and foresight which provided against all contingencies; so that when once he determined on any project, however difficult, they were always confident of its being crowned with success.

It may be imagined that such an association of young men as Wallace had formed, among whom talents and bravery were distinguishing characteristics, felt deeply the momentous crisis to which their country was approaching. The ambition of Edward, and his designs against the independence of their native country were too apparent to escape the notice of any individuals who had not an interest in appearing wilfully blind. The subserviency of those who represented the aristocracy was, therefore, regarded by their countrymen with feelings of deep humiliation and shame. It happened, unfortunately, for their characters, as well as for the best interests of the country, that most of the Scottish nobility held estates on both sides of the Tweed; and their selfishness dictated a line of policy extremely dangerous to the independence of Scotland. A wish to preserve their properties in both countries, inclined them to a ready obedience to whatever side was most

likely to gain the preponderance. Edward, who, besides his conquests on the Continent, had annexed the principality of Wales, appeared to these venal nobles, in the distracted state of their country's affairs, as very likely to consolidate Britain under his powerful and energetic sway. Under these disgraceful feelings, they vied with each other in their desire to propitiate the usurper by servile compliances. Those classes of lower rank, however, entertained sentiments of a totally opposite description, and looked upon the submission, with respect to the succession to the Scottish crown with feverish impatience.

Since the surrender of the regents to Edward, on the 11th of June, 1291, the different towns and fortresses of Scotland had been garrisoned by English soldiers. Between the inhabitants and the military, as might naturally have been expected, brawls were of frequent occurrence—and in those which came under the notice of Wallace, he seldom remained an inactive spectator. The English soldiers, considering themselves masters of Scotland, treated the people with great contempt and cruelty, took from them by force whatever they had a fancy to, and if the owners offered resistance, they were abused, beat, and sometimes killed; for which acts of violence the English authorities neither checked nor punished such culpable conduct; while the chains which fell upon the unhappy sufferers were neither unfelt nor invisible.

Even while yet a youth, Wallace looked with indignation upon the insolent conduct of the English soldiers, which sometimes fell upon himself. One day he went a-fishing, for sport, in the river Irvine, near Ayr. He had caught a good number of trout, which were carried by a boy who attended him with a fishing-basket, as is usual with anglers. Some English soldiers, who belonged to the garrison of Ayr, meeting him as he was returning home, and insisted, with their usual insolence, on taking the fish from the boy. Wallace, yielding in a manner to their superior numbers, offered them a part, but would on no account part with the whole basketful. The soldiers persevered in their demand, which Wallace as pertinaciously refused to comply with. From words they came to blows. Wallace had no other weapon than his fishing-rod, with the butt-end of which he struck the foremost of his opponents so hard a blow under the ear

that he killed him on the spot; and immediately seizing his fallen enemy's sword, he plied it with such fury that he put the others to flight, and carried his fish home in safety. The English governor anxiously sought for the *boy* who dared to assault his *three men*, that he might punish him for his temerity; but Wallace lay concealed among the hills for a few days, and then proceeded to the north.

Gilbert de Umfraville, governor of the castles of Dundee and Forfar, being desired by Edward to resign his command, refused, justly considering that he held these fortresses in charge from the Scottish regency; and therefore he could not surrender them to Edward, unless he and the Scottish regency joined in an obligation to indemnify him. His demand was complied with, and he retired from his office of governor. He was succeeded by one Selby, the head of a freebooting family in Cumberland, whose son, a fiery and impetuous young man, rashly insulted Wallace one day shortly after arriving in Dundee; our hero struck him dead on the spot with his dagger; and though surrounded by the train of his insulter, effected his escape to the house of a female dependent, who concealed him from his pursuers. Besides young Selby, several others, who attempted to intercept his flight, were either killed or severely wounded. The case, therefore, was of too serious a nature to be passed over quietly; but by the prudent management of his female preserver he was enabled to quit the town without being discovered. An act of outlawry followed this murder; and Wallace was hunted from place to place by the emissaries of the governor, who, eager to revenge the death of his son, offered great rewards for his apprehension. His success in eluding his pursuers was equal to the boldness of the deed for which he was pursued.

After lurking among the woods and impenetrable recesses of the country till the heat of the pursuit was over, Wallace ventured to communicate with his friends in the Carse of Gowrie. The anxiety of his mother respecting his fate required to be relieved; and, in obedience to her solicitations, to remove himself further from the scene of danger, he agreed to accompany her on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Margaret at Duffries. The dress required for this purpose was a sufficient disguise; and the

respect paid by the English to a saint of the royal blood, insured, in those gloomy days of superstition, all the facilities which their situation required.

While our hero was thus religiously employed, his father, it would appear, had become obnoxious to the English; but in what manner, we are left entirely to conjecture. Whether they had endeavoured to apprehend him for his refusal to swear allegiance to the English monarch; or, if driven from his house and home, he found himself constrained to retaliate upon his oppressors the injuries they had inflicted, are circumstances respecting which all authorities are silent.

An unfortunate rencounter, however, appears to have taken place in the district of Kyle in Ayrshire, between Sir Malcolm, at the head of a few of his retainers, and a party of English soldiers under the command of a person of the name of Fenwick; in which, after a gallant resistance, the Scots were defeated and their leader slain. The Minstrel asserts, and several historians have followed him that the brother of Wallace also fell on this occasion; but he is evidently wrong, as we have already shown from Wynton, that Sir Malcolm was succeeded in his estate by his eldest son.

The death of his father was not calculated to lessen the animosity which Wallace had hitherto entertained towards the English. Thirsting for revenge, he spurned the offers of some of his friends, who proposed to use their influence to get the act of outlawry recalled; and having placed his mother under the protection of her brother, Sir Reginald Crawford, he again betook himself to the woods.

The talents, vigour, and dexterity of the young outlaw soon attracted to his fortunes a number of reckless and intrepid spirits, inclined alike from habit and from circumstance, to prefer a life of savage and unrestrained liberty, to the uncertain and degrading protection of those who, though wearing the mask of friendship, were daily wounding their feelings, by the encroachments on the independence of their country.

As Scotland at that time abounded with game of every description, Wallace and his companions found no difficulty in maintaining themselves in their woodland retreats: from whence also they could issue forth to surprise the English, and supply themselves by force with

these necessities which their situation otherwise prevented them from obtaining. However well disposed the regency and the nobility of Scotland might have been basely to submit to the false claims of England, it was quite different with the nation at large; and the proceedings of Wallace, though not sanctioned by the shadow of government which still lingered in the country, were viewed by the humble classes of the Scots, not only with indulgence, but with approbation. From the prevalence of this feeling he derived many important advantages, and much valuable information respecting the movements of his enemies.

It has been asserted that at this early period of his career his conduct had drawn upon him the approving notice of the celebrated sage of Ercildoune, otherwise named Thomas the Rhymer, who so highly appreciated his talents and hardihood, as to risk his prophetic fame, then at its height, by predicting to his countrymen that William Wallace was the man destined to restore to Scotland her ancient glory. His matchless strength and ready wit joined to the sagacity with which he gave effect to his stratagems, tended, no doubt, to impress the *seer* with this favourable opinion. Among the stories recorded of his early years the following are entitled to a place in the history of his life.

Having visited Ayr one day in disguise, his attention was attracted by a crowd collected in the neighbourhood of the quarters of the military. In the midst of a circle of his own countrymen, there stood a brawny Englishman of huge dimensions, playing off his raillery against the Scots, and offering for a groat an opportunity of avenging any injury they might have received from the English, by permitting the best among them to exert their strength in striking a blow upon his back with a truncheon, which he held in his hand; accompanying this boast with certain ridiculous gestures and scurrilous language, while his mailed companions, with folded arms, stood loitering around, laughing and enjoying the humour of their bulky buffoon. Wallace, although in danger of being apprehended, approached, and offered treble the sum for the permission. This was readily agreed to by the jester, who winked to his companions as he prepared to fulfil the conditions. The wary Scot had observed the trick intended; and, grasping the truncheon, above the place

where the bulky champion expected it would give way, he let fall a blow with such hearty good-will, that the spine yielded to its force, and the boasting witling sunk with a deep groan at the feet of his companions. Instantly the English drew their swords to revenge the death of their favourite. One of them, advancing towards the offender, received a blow on the head which laid him across the body of the jester. Surrounded on all sides by the increasing numbers of his adversaries, he plied his weapon with a rapidity and a force which kept the most forward of them at bay. Over the steel cap of a trooper the fatal truncheon was shivered to pieces. Others seeing him, as they imagined, disarmed by this accident, rushed forward, expecting to overwhelm him by their numbers; but, on drawing his sword, which was concealed under his dress, they as quickly receded from the well-known strength of his arm. Having, by means of his trusty blade, cleared the way to one of the outlets of the town, he was there attacked by two of the boldest of the garrison, who had not previously mingled in the fray. The object of one of them seemed to be to engage him in a little sword-play, so as to give his party an opportunity of hemming him in; but Wallace not being inclined for such amusement, and knowing the value of his time, broke through the guard of his bold opponent, and with one blow clove him to the teeth; while the other, in the act of retreating, received a thrust through an opening in his armour, which, reaching his vitals, laid him senseless by his companions. Five of the English soldiers had now fallen beneath the arm of the youthful warrior; and the rest seemed so averse to come within his reach, that he had time to gain a little copse in the neighbourhood, where he had left his horse before entering the town, and bounding into the saddle, the hardy trooper was soon beyond the reach of any fresh assistance his enemies might procure. Horse and foot, however, were soon eager in the pursuit; but after a long and fruitless search they were forced to return—many of them who had already witnessed his prowess, no way displeased at their want of success.

The entire absence of anything like fear seems to have formed the most prominent feature in the character of Wallace. Although he had so narrowly escaped on the above occasion, and also aware of the ease with which

his person could be recognised, yet in a short time he returned back to the same town on the following occasion.

A report had circulated about the country, that on a certain day, a celebrated English prize-fighter would exhibit at Ayr, as a general challenger. An occurrence of this kind had powerful attractions, in that warlike age when every man required to know how to use the sword. Scots, as well as English, became deeply interested as the day of exhibition drew near; and Wallace, instigated partly by curiosity, and partly by a wish to acquire information of the numbers and notions of his enemies, made up his mind to be present. Having properly armed himself and fifteen of his companions, he proceeded to the scene of action. Their horses they left in a place of safety outside the town, and then made their entry from different quarters, so as not to attract the notice of their enemies.

In the midst of the throng collected to witness the feats of the English challenger, Wallace stood, with his face partially concealed in his cloak, to all appearance an unconcerned spectator, till he saw several of his countrymen, who had been bailed by the superior dexterity of their more practised antagonist, afterwards scoffed at, and otherwise insulted by the English soldiery. The feelings which this conduct excited were displayed on the expressive countenance of our hero, in such a manner as did not escape the notice of the victor, who, flushed with his success, invited him to a trial of his skill. Wallace unhesitatingly accepted the challenge; and, drawing his sword, prepared for the combat. The manner in which he handled his weapon soon convinced the English that their champion had met with his match, and was engaged in a perilous enterprise. His art and agility appeared unavailing against the cool self-possession of the Scot, who, after a few passes, became the assailant; and a blow, which descended upon the head of his antagonist with the rapidity of lightning, laid the arrogant boaster dead at his feet. This unexpected interruption of their amusement irritated the English soldiers; but when they recognised in the successful combatant the audacious outlaw with whom they had been so lately engaged, they eagerly crowded round, and endeavoured to prevent his escape. Undaunted by the numbers with whom he was

enviored, he dealt his blows in all directions with deadly effect, while his followers, mingling in the fray, attacked those who were near them with a fury that spread consternation and uproar through the whole crowd.

The English, finding themselves assailed from so many quarters, conceived that they were surrounded by a multitude of enemies. Wallace, always foremost in danger, according to the expressive words of Blind Harry, "Gret rowme about him maid;" and the enemy had already begun to give way, when a reinforcement from the Castle made its appearance. The battle was now renewed with redoubled fury on both sides; and the capture of our hero being the principal object in view, he became the object of the most determined attack. The few, however, who ventured within the reach of his sword, soon paid the forfeit of their temerity. Having collected his companions in a body, he fearlessly advanced into the centre of the English, diminishing their numbers with every stroke of his good sword, while his followers pressed with determined ferocity upon those who intercepted him. From the increasing number of his opponents, he at last became apprehensive of his retreat being cut off, if the unequal contest was much longer protracted.—Placing himself, therefore, in front of the battle, he ordered his party to make the best of their way, while he prevented, as much as he possibly could, the enemy from harassing their rear. By incredible exertions, they at last regained the post outside of the town, where they had left their horses, which they mounted, and were soon lost to their pursuers amid the shade of Saglane woods, leaving about thirty of the English, among whom were three knights belonging to Northumberland, dead upon the streets of Ayr.

These and similar exploits appear to have occupied the heroic Wallace, during the time the English held possession of the country under the nominal authority of the Scottish regency. Indeed the account of the early career of our hero gives a degree of probability to some of the wildest adventures described by his biographer, the Blind Minstrel. His animosity against the English made him rash; his great personal strength, exceedingly confident; and to attack and put to flight three soldiers who attempted to rob him of his day's sport, as he fished on Irvine water—to repay the rudeness of the squire Selby

by a mortal thrust with his dagger—or to slay a “buckler-player” at Ayr, were exactly such incidents as might be expected from the situation in which Wallace was then placed. Much as he trusted in his great personal strength, however, he usually took the precaution to wear a light coat of mail under his common clothes; so that when he travelled through the country, and mingled with the English, apparently unarmed, he was yet ready for battle, and provided against sudden attack.—He wore a haubergeon (armour to cover the neck and breast) under his gown or mantle; his bonnet, which, to common sight, was nothing more than a cap of cloth or velvet, had a steel casnet (helmet) concealed under it; a collar or neck-piece, of the same metal, fitted him so closely, that it was completely hidden by his doublet; and below his gloves, which, to those who stood by, seemed merely leather or cloth, he took care to have strong gauntlets of plate. His confidence in exposing himself, in these circumstances, in the midst of his enemies, is not so much to be wondered at; neither is the successful result in which most of his personal encounters were concluded so astonishing, when they who, trusting to their numbers, ventured to insult or assail him, found, that instead of a quiet traveller, clad in the “summer-weeds of peace,” they had to do with a hero in full armour, and of extraordinary strength.

For a leader he was eminently qualified, not only by the moral qualities of undaunted courage, by a genius naturally sagacious, and fertile and expedient, and a readiness of eye, and retentiveness of memory, but by physical powers, which, even after making allowance for the exaggerations of some of his biographers, appear, from all the historical notices that have been handed down to us, to have been greater than those allotted to the strongest men in a warlike age. Fordun, no mean authority, says, “He was of a tall and almost gigantic stature, broad shouldered, and large boned with long and muscular arms, yet thin in the flanks, and unencumbered by much flesh or fat round the reins: of an open and cheerful countenance and gracious address, though sometimes under the influence of rage and passion fearful to look on. In his skill and address in all warlike exercises he was equal to the most accomplished knights of his time; and nature seems to have liberally endowed

him with all the qualities which were calculated to conciliate the affection of his followers and to ensure him popularity with the people; in distributing the wealth and plunder, which fell into his hands, he was singularly generous; in visiting offences just and ready to forgive; in tribulation or distress, patient, sympathizing, and unselfish. The only thing he never could forgive was falsehood and treachery, and in the punishment of these, he would at times exercise a stern and inexorable cruelty, which tarnished his character. Yet, in the life that he led, and surrounded by the broken and desperate whom he at first commanded, the principle of honour and good faith to each other could alone, perhaps, be maintained by the certainty of punishment."

With regard to the condition of Scotland at the period when our hero arose in his strength:—Edward deemed himself secure in what he esteemed the complete subjugation of the country, and was now occupied with a war in France. Those of the Scottish nobles whom he most suspected were closely imprisoned in England; others, in whom he had more confidence accompanied him in his expedition, a few who had delivered hostages for their fidelity, were permitted to remain at home in a state of quiet and broken-hearted submission. But concealed under this moral gloom, there was a healthy spirit of freedom at work, which the short sighted views of the conqueror had not detected. Although the higher nobles and clergy, the wealthier knights and barons, the richer burghers and merchants, had renounced their independence, and taken the oath of homage to Edward, there were some even of the first, and many more of the last of these classes who had fled into the recesses of the north, disdaining such submission; whilst in the breasts of the free vassals and farmers, who constituted the great body of the people, who were trained to the use of arms, the spirit of determined resistance and animosity against their enemies was ready to burst forth with a violence proportionable to the pressure of suffering with which they were loaded. The same great truth was, in short, apparent in Scotland, which has been made manifest in many a subsequent era of the history of liberty. The nobles of a country may be easily shut up in prisons, or driven into exile; the clergy may be corrupted and gained over; the lesser barons may be forced, by the confiscation of their

estates and the dread of utter ruin, into a temporary and deceitful allegiance to a conqueror; but the love of liberty in the feelings of the great body of a free people, is an immortal and inextinguishable principle, which can never be destroyed but by the extermination of the inhabitants themselves.

In the principal towns, where the conqueror kept a strict watch, and around the great castles and fortresses which were garrisoned by English troops, all appeared sufficiently quiet and submissive; but at a distance from them the country swarmed with fierce and discontented spirits: every remote valley, every wooded glen or rocky cavern, or ancient forest, had its little band of brave and warlike men, who, with the ardour and tenacity of the national character, clung fondly to the shadow of their former liberty, and whenever they came in contact with the English soldiery, were ready to break out into acts of violence. Many of these renouncing their settled homes and regular occupations, and deserted by their feudal masters who were on the continent with Edward, began to organize themselves into predatory bands, which subsisted by plunder, infesting the highways, and attacking the straggling parties of the English. These men, it is evident, only waited for a leader to unite them into a formidable opposition to the usurping government. The rumours of our hero's exploits against the common enemy, naturally caused many of these "broken" men to look to Wallace. But it will be necessary to take a glance at the cause of this national disorder.

CHAPTER II.

Claim of Edward to Feudal Homage. Accession of Baliol. Siege of Berwick. Battle of Dunbar.

UPON the death of Alexander the Third, in 1286, without children, the Scottish nation was thrown into a state of deep perplexity and distress. The nobles had indeed, during the life of their late monarch, affixed their seals to a deed, which declared his grand-daughter, Margaret, the daughter of Eric king of Norway, and grand-niece, to Edward the First, the successor to the throne. But she was an infant in a foreign land, and nothing but her precarious life stood between the people and all the miseries of a disputed succession.

Within a month after the death of the king a meeting of the Estates was held at Scone, and six regents appointed for the government of Scotland. Under their administration the country was separated into two great divisions, the first, including the whole district beyond the Frith of Forth, was placed under the power of William Fraser, Bishop of St. Andrews, Duncan Earl of Fife, and Alexander Earl of Buchan: the second comprehending the territory to the south of the same river, was committed to the charge of Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, John Comyn Lord of Badenoch, and James the High Steward of Scotland. With these governors (who were soon after reduced to four by the murder of the Earl of Fife, and the death of the Earl of Buchan)—Edward I., who as grand uncle of Margaret, was regarded by her father Eric, in the light of a protector and adviser, entered immediately into a correspondence, which for some time appears to have been kept concealed. Its object, however, was undoubtedly to bring about a marriage between the infant queen, and his eldest son then also a child, and by this means to accomplish his favourite plan of uniting England, Scotland and Wales into one great kingdom. That both this monarch and his father had formed the design of re-establishing that unfounded claim of superiority over Scotland, as a fief of the crown of England, which

was extorted from William the Lion, and solemnly renounced by Richard Cœur de Lion, who was aware of its injustice, is a matter of historical certainty. The insidious attempt of Henry III., when he endeavoured at the marriage of his daughter with Alexander III., to entrap the youthful sovereign of Scotland into an acknowledgement of feudal submission, who replied "that he had been invited to York to marry the Princess of England, not to treat of affairs of state, and that he could not take a step so important, without the knowledge and approbation of his parliament;" and the repetition of the same demand by Edward I., on the occasion of his coronation, demonstrated their purpose to the nobility and the nation at large. It was natural therefore that any intrigues of Edward, any attempt to get possession of the youthful queen, should be regarded with extreme distrust and suspicion, especially by those who were in the line of succession to the crown. Accordingly we find that on the 20th September, 1286, not eight months after Alexander's death, a remarkable meeting of some powerful Scottish and English nobles took place at Turnberry, the castle of Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, son of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale and Cleveland, the object of which was to support the claim of the elder Bruce to the throne, and defeat the intrigues of Edward. With the deep laid schemes of the Plantaganet, the partisans of Bruce were probably made acquainted by two English nobles of high rank and influence, who privately repaired to Turnberry, and joined the faction of Bruce. These were Thomas de Clare, brother of the Earl of Gloucester, and Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster. Thomas de Clare was nephew to Bruce's wife, and both he and his brother the Earl of Gloucester were naturally anxious to support Bruce's title to the crown. Nor was the scheme in any respect a desperate one, for Bruce already had great influence. There attended the meeting at Turnberry, Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, with his three sons, Walter Stewart, Earl of Monteith, Bruce's own son the Earl of Carrick, and Bernard Bruce, James, the High Steward of Scotland, with John, his brother, Angus, son of Donald, Lord of the Isles, and Alexander, his son. The power and resources of these barons were extremely formidable, as they could bring into the field almost the undivided strength of the west and south of Scotland; whilst it was well known

that the Earl of Dunbar, by his possession of the strong castle of that name, and of the passes which led from the one country to the other, could, at his option, facilitate or resist any mutual invasion; so that it was correctly said, Earl Patrick held the keys of England at his girdle. These nobles now entered into a bond or covenant, by which it was declared, that they would thenceforth adhere to, and take part with, one another, on all occasions; and against all persons, saving their allegiance to the King of England, and also their allegiance to him who should gain the kingdom of Scotland by right of descent from King Alexander, then lately deceased; and although the fact does not appear in the document which was drawn up on the occasion, there can be little doubt that they were decidedly adverse to the designs of the King of England, and to the projected marriage and succession of the Maiden of Norway, as she was called.

It cannot be stated as historically true, but it is in the highest degree probable, that Baliol, the rival competitor, had, at the same time, his secret meetings with the barons who supported his claim; and although agreeing with Bruce in his inclination to resist the succession of the infant Margaret, that he was his mortal opponent in his design of making himself master of a crown which Baliol regarded as his hereditary right. Even in the assembly of the States of the kingdom, which occurred immediately subsequent to the death of Alexander, a violent dispute, relative to the succession, took place between the partisans of Bruce and Baliol, in which the nobles and the prelates of the realm were divided into two factions: and soon after, such was the violence of the two parties, that, uncontrolled by the authority of the regents, they broke out into rebellion against the government, and open war with each other, which continued to spread its ravage through the country for two years. The Earl of Carrick laid waste the county of Wigton, of which the greater part, if not the whole, was the property of Baliol. This haughty baron again retaliated upon the lands of Bruce and his supporters, whilst the regents in vain endeavoured and exerted themselves to re-establish the peace and tranquillity of the realm.

Whilst everything in Scotland thus tended to anarchy, Edward, with that prudent caution, in not discovering

his ultimate designs, which forms a prominent feature in his character, kept himself at a distance from the scenes of commotion, with which he was yet well acquainted. He knew that he had friends amongst the regents, who would not be backward to solicit his interference when the proper time arrived; and he had already acquired an influence over the youthful King of Norway, who was then only in his eighteenth year, which he trusted he should turn to his advantage. Whilst he neglected no opportunity of evincing the most sincere friendship and consideration for the government of Scotland, and the nation at large, he hesitated not to denounce the Earl of Carrick and his party as "the king's enemies of Scotland;" and, in the meantime, despatched a secret envoy to the court of Rome, for the purpose of procuring a dispensation for the marriage of his son, Prince Edward, with the Maiden of Norway. In his petition to the pope, Edward insists upon the increasing hostility and rancour which would be fostered between the two kingdoms, should the hand of that infant princess, and with it her realm of Scotland, be settled upon any other than his son; and his holiness, who was anxious at this moment to conciliate the English monarch, lent a willing ear to the suggestion, and without scruple granted the required dispensation.

Things being thus prepared, it was judged proper that the King of England should now publicly appear in his character of mediator between the revolted nobles of Scotland and the regents of the kingdom. The King of Norway, accordingly, becoming alarmed for the condition of his daughter's dominions, despatched an embassy to consult with Edward upon the state of her affairs; and, at the same time, the regents gave a commission to the bishops of St. Andrews and Glasgow, expressly directing them to enter into a negociation with the King of England and the messengers from Norway upon the state of the country, empowering them to ratify whatever should be agreed upon, "saving in every article the honour and liberty of the kingdom, and providing that the conditions should involve nothing which in future ages may be prejudicial to the realm and people of Scotland." A memorable clause, afterwards shamefully violated by Edward, but evincing that, at least in this early period, the regents either did not suspect the ultimate designs of the English

king in insisting upon his claim of superiority as lord paramount of Scotland, or, suspecting, were determined to defeat them.

The natural explanation of Edward's policy at this early period, is to be found in his determination to unite Scotland to his dominions. For this purpose we see he had secretly resolved upon a marriage between his son and the infant queen; but, if this failed, he reserved to himself the claim of feudal superiority, which entitled him, upon the smallest pretext of rebellion or commotion, to assert his right of property over the kingdom. The slightest mention, however, of this claim, at so early a period of his proceedings, might have ruined the marriage; whilst a total renunciation of it, if the marriage failed, would have thwarted him in his ulterior designs; and his conduct, in avoiding the danger on both sides, was a masterpiece of state policy. Edward first prevailed upon the Scottish regents to send commissioners to Salisbury, who, along with the Norwegian ambassadors, and his own envoys, the Earls of Warren and Pembroke, resolved that the infant queen, under certain conditions, should be sent to England, and from thence into her own kingdom. The Norwegians agreed for their own monarch, that he would deliver her free of matrimonial engagement to Edward; who, on his side, came under a solemn obligation, so soon as Scotland was sufficiently tranquil for her safe residence, to send her thither equally free as he received her, under the condition that the Scots should not dispose of her in marriage to any person without the express council of Edward, and the consent of her father Eric. To this the Scottish envoys consented; and they further agreed, that if any of the regents were obnoxious to the Queen of Scotland, or to her father, they should be removed by the advice of the councillors of Norway and Scotland, and other persons selected for the purpose by the King of England—a very important provision, and evidently directed against the High Steward, (one of the regents,) who, Edward was aware, had joined the confederacy at Turnberry, and taken part in the insurrection of the Earl of Carrick.

Although it is obvious that the terms of this negotiation had a concealed reference to the intended marriage, and were eminently favourable to the views of Edward, still no public allusion was made to the union which he

contemplated. Not long afterwards, however, the project appears to have been universally known in Scotland; and the prelates and nobility of that country having assembled at Brigham, (12th March, 1289,) drew up a letter to the King of England, in which they expressed their concurrence in the proposed alliance, and their joy in having received intelligence that the Apostle (the pope) had granted a dispensation for the marriage of Margaret, their dear lady and queen, with the heir of England.

In consequence of this letter, which was followed by a similar one addressed to the King of Norway, the marriage was finally agreed on in a solemn meeting of the Scottish Estates, held at Brigham, in the month of July, 1290, and attended upon the part of England by Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham, and five other plenipotentiaries. The principal articles of this treaty of Brigham are of much importance, as illustrating the justice and inveteracy of that long war, which afterwards desolated the two kingdoms. It was agreed by the English plenipotentiaries that the rights, laws, liberties, and customs of Scotland, were to be inviolably observed in all time coming throughout the whole kingdom, saving always the rights which the King of England, or any other person, has possessed before the date of this treaty. It was stipulated also that failing Margaret and Edward, or either of them, without issue, the kingdom should belong to the nearest heirs, to whom it ought of right return, wholly, freely, absolutely, and without any subjection, so that nothing should either be added to, or taken from, the rights of the King of England. In the salvo thus introduced, we have a continuation of that quibbling, sinister, and narrow-minded policy which marked the conduct of the English king in this disgraceful affair; for under the specious appearance of a rigorous impartiality, it was so worded as to permit Edward, at any future period, to revive his unjust claim of feudal superiority.

His next step was one of a more extraordinary nature, and could hardly have been adopted without a secret understanding between the king and some of the Scottish regents, whom he had gained over to his interest. Having taken a solemn oath to observe all the stipulations of the treaty, he observed that it was impossible for him to fulfil his engagement, and to maintain the laws of Scotland, without the presence of an English governor in that

country; and without waiting for any consent he appointed the Bishop of Durham to this high office. Either weakly unwilling to interrupt the accomplishment of the marriage, or perhaps prevailed on by more solid considerations, the Scottish nobles did not resist this direct violation of the treaty, under the mask of an anxiety to fulfil its provisions. Edward's next request, however, was not so tamely acquiesced in. He stated that having heard rumours of commotions and civil disturbances in Scotland, he considered it necessary that all the castles and fortalices of that country should be delivered into his hands. To this demand the Scots at once gave a peremptory refusal. These castles were held, they declared, in the name and for the behoof of their young queen, and for her they would keep them, until she arrived in her own dominions and received them at their hands. With this firm reply Edward was obliged to be satisfied; and sensible that he had overrated his influence, he patiently awaited the arrival of the young queen.

All eyes now anxiously looked towards Norway. It was now certain she had sailed, and the preparations to welcome her arrival were joyfully proceeding, when a melancholy rumour arrived that she had sickened at Orkney, which was soon succeeded by the overwhelming intelligence of her death. It would be difficult, perhaps, to point out a crisis in the history of any European kingdom, in which so much happiness or misery seemed to hang suspended on a single life; and we are not to wonder at the expressions of a contemporary prelate, "that at the report of her death the kingdom became disturbed, and the community sank into despair." She was the last descendant of Alexander, in whose days every man had sat in security under his own vine, none making him afraid; she had survived that lamented prince little more than four years, and now that she was gone, nothing stood between Scotland and two of the most grievous calamities which can befall a nation—war within its own bosom, kindled by the claims of various fierce and powerful competitors, and the certainty of attack by an ambitious foreign power who had long eagerly watched for an opportunity similar to that which now occurred. Scarcely had the certain news of her death arrived in Scotland, when symptoms of both these evils began unequivocally to manifest themselves. Bruce, the lord of

Annandale, suddenly came to Perth with a formidable force; the Earls of Mar and Athole assembled their feudal services; other powerful barons began to collect their armed vassals; and all those fierce and tumultuous spirits, to whom, even under its most peaceful aspect the feudal system was apt to offer encouragement, issued from their little fortalices or mountain holds, allured by the hopes of plunder, and the certainty of confusion and change. Baliol, who was in England, had a firm friend in the bishop of St. Andrews, who, with a traitorous policy, corresponded with Edward also, and entreated this monarch, as the plan best adapted to secure his own interest, to enter into an agreement with Baliol, and advance to the Borders of Scotland. In this way, according to the opinion of this crafty prelate, the effusion of blood would be prevented, and the people of Scotland be enabled, according to the terms of their oath, to elect as their monarch him who was nearest in blood to the last Alexander. The real import of this advice was, that Edward should gain Baliol to his interest, that Baliol should receive the kingdom under the condition of holding it as a vassal of England, and that the English monarch, by his presence with his army on the borders, should dictate their choice to the Scottish people. All this, it may be imagined, the sagacious Edward was not slow to comprehend; and so happy did the crisis appear to him for the execution of his designs, that a contemporary English historian informs us he could not conceal his exultation, but declared to his privy councillors that the time had now arrived to reduce Scotland under his power, as effectually as he had already completed the subjection of Wales.

He accordingly commanded the barons of Yorkshire, Lanarkshire, Westmorland, Cumberland, and Northumberland, to meet him with their whole powers at Norham, on the 3rd of June, 1291; and he requested the clergy and nobility of Scotland to attend upon him at the same place, in the month of May, for the purpose of deliberating upon the succession to the crown, and putting an end to those fatal and unnatural commotions which then distracted the kingdom, by weighing the claims of the various competitors, and distributing impartial justice to all. It has been made a matter of

discussion amongst our historians, whether Edward was solicited or invited by the Scots themselves to become umpire in the important question of the succession to the throne, and it is not unimportant to observe, that in his own account of the transactions there does not appear the slightest hint of such an invitation. But, however, this may be, it is impossible not to remark how artfully his invitation to the nobles, who insisted on their right to the crown, was calculated to promote the ultimate views of Edward. It necessarily created in their minds a disposition to oblige a monarch who had it in his power to reward his accommodating vassals with a present of the crown; it placed their individual ambition in direct and dangerous opposition to their patriotic principles; it prevented co-operation by splitting a country, already unhappily divided, into still more numerous and bitter factions; and it thus gave time to Edward to mature his plans, to collect his strength, and to arm himself by political intrigue, as well as by actual force, against all opposition.

It ought to be recollected that at this time many of the most powerful Scottish barons, who were of Norman extraction, possessed large estates in England, which were liable, according to the principles of the feudal laws, to immediate forfeiture, upon any act of disobedience to their superior, the King of England. Over these persons, some of whom were competitors for the throne, Edward had thus a double tie; and the assembly of prelates and nobles of Scotland having met him according to his request, at Norham, the king, surrounded by his barons and nobility, addressed the Scots, by the mouth of his High Justicier, Roger le Brabazon, in the following manner:—"That he had considered the difficulties in which the kingdom of Scotland was involved by the death of Alexander the Third and his offspring, and the dangers arising from disputed succession: that his good-will and affection to the whole nation, and to each individual in it, were sincere, for *in their defence he himself was interested*: that he had called the Scots to meet him at this place, with the view that justice might be done to all the competitors, and the internal tranquillity of the kingdom established: that he had undertaken a long journey, to do justice in person, to all, as *superior and lord paramount of the kingdom of Scotland*: that he

meant not to encroach on the rights of any man; but on the contrary, as lord paramount, to administer ample and speedy justice to all. My master, the King of England, therefore, requires of each and all of you, the prelates, nobles, barons, and community of Scotland, to acknowledge him henceforth as your true and undoubted lord superior, from whom you hold your land; and whose decision, as such, you are bound to obey."

At this demand the whole assembly stood motionless; it was as unexpected as it was insulting, and the meeting became at once aware of the difficulties with which they were surrounded, and of the formidable union of power, ability, and ambition of which they were ready to become the victims. They gazed doubtfully on each other, and all shrunk from a reply which must either announce the sacrifice of national independence, or bring upon them the wrath of a prince whose power was as imminent and formidable as his resolution was unbending. At length one of the assembly, possessed of more courage than the rest, stood up and demanded delay. All were, till this moment, he declared, ignorant that such a right of superiority existed in the person of the King of England; and upon so momentous a question, it was impossible, without flagrantly violating their oaths, solemnly taken after the death of their late monarch, to come to any resolution while the throne was vacant.—“By holy Edward!” cried the king, starting from his seat, “by holy Edward, whose crown I wear, I will vindicate my just rights, or perish in the attempt!” The Scots requested a delay, in order to inform their countrymen who were absent; and, in consequence, the proceedings were put off till next day. A farther delay was then requested; and they were allowed an interval of three weeks for deliberation, by which time he expected them to meet him once more at Norham, there to acknowledge his superiority, and receive his judgment.

In three weeks he knew that an English force, far more formidable than any which could be brought against him, would be gathered together at Norham; and to this, as well as to the intrigues and dissensions amongst the various competitors for the crown, he confidently looked forward for a favourable result. Nor was he disappointed in his expectations. On the 2nd of June, the prelates, nobles, and barons of Scotland,

amongst whom were nine competitors for the crown, assembled on Holywell Haugh, a level plain opposite to the castle of Norham; and the Bishop of Bath and Wells having opened the conferences in the name of his master, informed them that Edward, in virtue of his right of superiority as lord paramount of Scotland, would proceed to determine the succession to the kingdom. [†] He then turned to Bruce, lord of Annandale, and enquired of him whether he was content to receive judgment in this competition from his lord, Edward, King of England, in his character of lord paramount of the kingdom of Scotland, and to abide by his decision. To this demand, Bruce, before the assembled prelates and barons, clearly and unhesitatingly replied, that he was content; that he acknowledged Edward as lord superior of Scotland, and awaited justice at his hands. The same question was then put to John Baliol, and the rest of the competitors, all of whom, either personally, or by their attorneys, returned the same answer, and affixed their seals to an instrument, which recorded their solemn surrender of the liberty of the contested kingdom.

^c It would be tedious, as well as painful, to enlarge upon the various steps in this extraordinary procedure of Edward. Having procured the acknowledgment of his superiority, his great difficulty was overcome. He affected, indeed, much deliberation and gravity in his endeavours to investigate the grounds of the various claims, but every step followed according to a previous arrangement, and led to a conclusion long resolved on. He appointed commissioners of both nations to assist him in his judgment; he accepted from the regents of Scotland, and from the governors of its castles, a surrender of the kingdom, which he immediately restored to them; he received the homage of Bruce, Baliol, and many of the barons and nobles; he ordered copies of the oaths of fealty, and the whole proceedings regarding his right of superiority to be sent to the various monasteries throughout Scotland; and finally appointed the competitors to meet him again at Berwick, on the 3rd of August. It was now only the 3rd of June, and he employed himself during the interval in taking a journey through Scotland, proceeding as far as Perth, and requiring freemen, of all ranks and conditions, to take the oaths of fealty. He then returned to Berwick, heard the claims

of competitors, requested further time to deliberate and consult the learned in foreign parts; and at length in his parliament, held upon the 17th of November, at Berwick-on-Tweed, which was attended by the prelates and nobility of both countries, he pronounced his final judgment of John Baliol, declaring that the kingdom of Scotland must, of necessity, belong to him, because, by the laws of both England and Scotland, in the succession to indivisible heritage, the more remote in degree in the first line of descendants, had ever been held to exclude the nearer degree in the second. He then commanded the regents to deliver the kingdom, with its castles and fortresses, into the hands of their new sovereign; and the last act of this extraordinary drama was concluded by the ceremony of breaking the great Seal of Scotland, which had been used by the regents, into four pieces, and depositing the fragments in the English treasury; after which Baliol swore fealty to Edward, and repaired with his nobles to his coronation to Scone.

Baliol had scarce taken possession of his kingdom, when an event occurred which recalled him to a sense of his miserable subjection, and brought out the character of Edward in all its severity. It had been a special provision of the treaty of Brigham that no Scottish subject was to be compelled to answer in any criminal or civil suit without the bounds of the kingdom; but, in the face of this, a freeman of Berwick entered an appeal to the King of England, from a judgment of those regents he had appointed in Scotland during the *interregnum*. Baliol was not slow to remind Edward of his solemn promise, to observe the laws and usages of Scotland; and he earnestly protested against withdrawing any pleas from that kingdom to the courts of England. To this Edward replied, that he had, in every article, religiously observed his promise; but, that when complaints were brought against his own ministers, who held their commissions from him as sovereign lord of Scotland, it was he alone who could have cognizance of them, nor had his subjects therein any right to interpose. He then, with that air of apparent impartiality which he often threw over his transgressions, required the opinion of some of the ablest of the Scottish judges, with regard to the law and custom of their kingdom, in one of the cases brought before him; and commanded his council to decide

according to the judgment which they delivered. Irritated, however, by being reminded of the treaty of Brigham, he openly declared, by his justiciary Brabazon, that although during the vacancy of the Scottish throne, he had been induced to make promises which suited the time—now when the nation was ruled by a king, he did not intend to be bound by them, to the effect of excluding complaints brought before him from that kingdom, or of preventing him from dispensing justice, and exercising the rights of his sovereign dominion according to his pleasure and power. To give the greater weight to this imperious announcement, the King of England summoned Baliol, and his principal prelates and nobles, into his privy-chamber at Newcastle, and there made Brabazon resolutions upon the matter in question; after which, Edward himself rose up, and addressed them. “These are my firm determinations,” said he, “with regard to all complaints or appeals brought before me from Scotland; nor will I be bound by any former promises or concessions made to the contrary. I am little careful by what deeds or instruments they may be ratified; I shall exercise that superiority and direct dominion which I hold over the kingdom of Scotland, when and where I please; nor will I hesitate if necessary, to summon the King of Scotland himself into my presence within the kingdom of England.”

Baliol's spirits sunk under this declaration; and he, and the Scottish nobility then in his train, pusillanimously consented to buy their peace with Edward by a renunciation of all stipulations regarding the laws and liberties of Scotland, which had been made in the treaty of Brigham, and, which so long as they continued in force, convicted the king of England of a flagrant disregard of his oath, formerly so solemnly pledged.

The policy of Edward towards Scotland and its new king was at once artful and insulting. He treated every assumption of sovereignty with rigour and contempt; and omitted no opportunity in summoning Baliol to answer before him to the complaints brought against his government. He procured his parliament to pass some regulations regarding the attendance of the king of Scots, which, from their severity seem to have been expressly intended to exasperate Baliol, who found that in every case of appeal, he was not only to be dragged in as a

party, but that his personal attendance was to be rigidly enforced. The first was aggrievous, the last an intolerable burden, to which no one with even the name of king could long submit. The indignation of the Scottish barons at this unworthy treatment of their sovereign was very great, and shame and remorse for the part they had acted began to be mingled in their bosoms with the reviving feelings of wounded honour and ancient independence. In these sentiments they were supported by the unanimous approbation of the whole body of their vassals and tenants, who although not animated at this early spirit of unforgiving hostility to England, which for centuries marked the subsequent course of their history, were strong in the feeling of a national liberty, which till now had never been invaded.

Relying therefore upon the support of his nobility and his people, Baliol for a short time refused to obey the first summons of Edward; but after an interval he judged it prudent, before a final rupture, to attend the English parliament. It was an appeal from Macduff, son of the earl of Fife, against whom Baliol had decided in an important case during his first parliament. On being asked for his defence against the complaint of Macduff, he said, "I am King of Scotland. To the complaint of Macduff, or to any matters regarding my kingdom, I dare not return an answer without the consent of my people." "Whence comes this refusal?" cried Edward. "Are you not my liegeman? Do you deny your homage? Is it not my summons which brings you where you are?" "It is true," replied Baliol "that I am your liegeman for the kingdom of Scotland; but as the matters now before us concern the people of my kingdom, no less than myself, delay ought to be allowed me till I have consulted them, lest I should be misled for want of advice, more especially as those now with me neither will nor dare give me their opinion without solemnly consulting the estates of the kingdom." This spirited remonstrance was interpreted by the English parliament into an act of contempt and contumacious disobedience, offered by a vassal to a superior; and they proceeded to pronounce judgment in favour of Macduff, and awarded damages against Baliol, whom they commanded, as a punishment for delinquency, to deliver into the power of

Edward three of the Scottish castles, to remain in his hands till due satisfaction was made.

It is evident that the resolutions of the parliament were unnecessarily violent, and could not have been carried into effect without an army in Scotland. The King of England, aware of this, and dreading to excite a rebellion for which he was not then prepared, listened to the demand of Baliol for delay, and suspended all proceedings until the day after the Feast of the Trinity, in 1294.

Not long after this, Edward, who was a vassal of the King of France for the duchy of Aquitaine, became involved with his lord superior, in a quarrel similar to that between himself and Baliol. A fleet of English ships had encountered and plundered some French merchant ships, and Philip, exerting his right as lord superior, summoned Edward to appear in his court at Paris, and there answer, as his vassal, for the injuries which had been committed. This order was unheeded; upon which Philip, sitting on his throne, gave sentence against the English King, pronounced him contumacious, and directed his territories in France to be seized, as forfeited to the crown. Edward renounced his allegiance as a vassal of the King of France, and declared war against that nation.

To assist him in this war he summoned Baliol, and the most powerful of the Scottish nobles, to attend him in person with their armed vassals; but his tyrannical conduct had entirely disgusted the Scots. They treated his summons with scorn; and instead of arming their vassals for his assistance, they assembled a parliament at Scone. Its first step was under the pretence of diminishing the public charges, to dismiss all Englishmen from Baliol's court; and thus having got rid of such troublesome spies upon their measures, they engaged in a treaty of alliance with France, and determined upon war with England. Many estates in Scotland were at this time held by English barons, and many also of the Scottish nobility possessed lands in England. Anxious for a general union against the common enemy, the Scottish estates in the hands of English barons were forfeited, and their proprietors banished; while those Scottish nobles who remained faithful to Edward had their lands seized and forfeited.

Edward, although enraged at the conduct of the Scottish parliament, and meditating a deep revenge, was at this time harrassed with a war with France and a rebellion of the Welsh. Dissimulation and policy were the arms to which he had recourse, whilst he employed the interval which he gained in sowing dissension among the Scottish nobles, and collecting an army for the punishment of their rebellion. To Bruce, the son of the competitor for the crown, he affected uncommon friendship; regretted his decision in favour of the now rebellious Baliol; and declared his determination to place him upon the throne. This powerful baron and his son, afterwards king, with several of the Scottish nobles, repaired to Edward, and renewed to him their oaths of homage. The undecided character of Baliol was ill-calculated to remove the disunion amongst the nobles; and the party who then ruled in Scotland, dreading a submission upon the part of their king, secluded him from all power, confined him in a mountain fortress, and placed the management of affairs in the hands of twelve of the leading nobles.

The measures adopted by these guardians were decided and spirited. They, in the name of the king of Scotland, drew up an instrument, renouncing all fealty and allegiance to Edward on account of the many very grievous injuries committed upon his rights and property. They despatched ambassadors to France, who concluded a treaty of marriage and alliance—the French king engaging to assist with troops; and they assembled an army under the command of the Earl of Buchan, which invaded Cumberland. This expedition, however, returned without honour, having been repulsed in an attempt to storm Carlisle.

Nothing could be more favourable for Edward than the miserably disunited state of Scotland. He knew that three powerful factions divided the country, and hindered that firm political union, without which, against such an enemy, no successful opposition could be made. These advantages, the result of his own artful policy, were easily perceived by Edward. It was now his time for action, and for inflicting that vengeance upon his enemies which, with this monarch, the longer it was delayed, was generally the more sure and terrible. He assembled a numerous and well appointed army, consisting of thirty

thousand foot, and four thousand heavy-armed horse. He was joined by Beck, the warlike Bishop of Durham, with a thousand foot and five hundred horse; and with this combined force, and the two sacred banners of St. John of Beverley, and St. Cuthbert of Durham, carried before the army, he marched towards Scotland, and came before the town of Berwick, then in the hands of the Scots.

Edward was determined at all events to make himself master of this city, which was the emporium of foreign commerce, where the wealthy Flemings had established a flourishing trade, and which, in the extent of its shipping, and the wealth and enterprise of its merchants, surpassed any other seaport in either country. Edward summoned it to surrender, and offered it terms of accommodation which were refused. Upon this he did not immediately proceed to storm, but drew back his army to a field near a nunnery some distance from the town, where he could more easily conceal his dispositions for the attack. He then despatched a large division with orders to assault the town, choosing a line of march which concealed them from the citizens; and he commanded his fleet to enter the river at the same time that the great body of the army, led by himself, were ready to storm. The Scottish garrison fiercely attacked the ships, burnt three of them, and compelled the rest to retire; but they, in their turn, were driven back by the fury of the land attack. Edward, himself, mounted on horseback, was the first who leaped the dike; and the soldiers, animated by the example and presence of their king, carried every thing before them. All the horrors of a rich and populous city, sacked by an infuriated soldiery, and a commander thirsting for vengeance, now succeeded. Seventeen thousand persons—barons and burgesses, nuns and friars, women and children—all were involved in one indiscriminate and appalling butchery: and for two days the city ran with blood like a river. The churches to which the miserable inhabitants had fled for sanctuary were violated and defiled with blood, and turned into stables for the English cavalry.

In the midst of this massacre a fine trait of fidelity occurred. The Flemings had established their principal factory in a strong building called the Red-hall, which, by their charter, they were bound to defend to the last

extremity against the English. True to their engagements, thirty of these merchants held out the place against the whole English army. Night came, and still it was not taken. Irritated by this obstinate courage, Edward ordered it to be set on fire, and its faithful defenders were buried in the burning ruins.

The massacre of Berwick, which took place on Good Friday, was a terrible example of the vengeance which Edward was ready to inflict upon his enemies. Its plunder enriched his army, and it never recovered its commercial importance. Whilst Edward remained at Berwick, throwing up new fortifications against future attacks, the Abbot of Arbroath, attended by three of his monks, appeared at his court, and delivered to him Baliol's renunciation of his homage. "You have," said the Scottish King, "wantonly summoned me to your courts; you have committed grievous outrages and robberies upon my subjects, both by sea and land; you have seized my castles and estates in England, killed and imprisoned my subjects, and the merchants of my realm; and when I demanded a redress of these injuries, you have invaded my dominions at the head of a vast army, with the purpose of depriving me of my crown; and have cruelly ravaged the land. Wherefore, I renounce that fealty and homage, which have been extorted from me, and do resolve openly to oppose myself, in defence of my kingdom, against Edward of England." Edward received this letter with angry contempt. "The senseless traitor!" said he; "of what folly is he guilty! But since he will not come to us, we will go to him!"

Enraged at the dreadful vengeance inflicted on Berwick, the Scots made a second inroad into England; and imitating the merciless conduct of Edward, ravaged Redesdale and Tynedale, carrying away a great booty, and sparing neither sex nor age; but the vengeance of the Scots was short-lived, and their plans unconnected. That of their enemy was the very opposite: it was deep laid in its plans, simultaneous in its movements, and remorseless in its contemplation of consequences.

Edward resolved upon making himself master of the castle of Dunbar, at this time one of the strongest, and by its situation, most important in Scotland; and for this purpose he despatched the Earl of Surrey with ten thousand foot, and a thousand heavy-armed horse. When

summoned, the garrison agreed to surrender, unless relieved within three days; and the Scots, anxious to retain so important a place, led on the whole of their army, and possessed themselves of a strong and excellent position on the high ground above Dunbar. Forty thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse encamped on the heights, near Spot; and, confident of rescue, the garrison of the castle insulted the English from the walls, as if already beaten.

On the first appearance of the Scottish army, Surrey steadily advanced to attack it. On approaching the high ground, it was necessary to deploy through a valley—and the Scots imagined they observed confusion in the English ranks when executing this movement. Mistaking this for flight, they rashly abandoned their position upon the heights, and blowing their horns, which, according to the expression of a contemporary historian, “made a noise enough to have startled hell itself,” rushed down upon the enemy, whom instead of a flying and disorderly mass, they found with levelled spears, and in excellent array, ready to receive them. The consequence of which was a total defeat, in which upwards of ten thousand of the Scots were slain, and the flower of their nobility either left dead upon the field, or made prisoners by Edward. These barons were immediately sent off in chains to England, to be distributed amongst the various castles of that kingdom; and the monarch proceeded to reap the fruits of a victory which, for a time, laid Scotland at his mercy.

Though there be no direct evidence of the fact, yet there is every reason to conjecture that both Wallace and his brother were present at the battle of Dunbar. It has already been shown that Sir Malcolm outlived his father; and in the work of Blind Harry, we have an account of the manner in which he met his death. He is represented as surrounded by a multitude of enemies, and bravely defending himself on his knees, with all the energy of despair, after he had been hamstrung to prevent his escape. Being at last overpowered by a mass of spearmen, he was unmercifully put to death. Though Henry does not mention when this took place, yet, from the previous comparative tranquillity which prevailed in the country, the conflict of Dunbar appears most likely to have been the scene of so deadly a struggle.

Edward, returning from Lothian, sat down before the

castle of Roxburgh, which was surrendered to him. Soon after, the strong fortress of Jedburgh yielded to his mercy; and his army being reinforced by a body of fifteen thousand men from Wales, he was enabled to send home that part of his English force which had suffered most from fatigue in his expedition. With these fresh levies, he advanced to Edinburgh, made himself master of the castle after a siege of eight days; passed rapidly to Stirling, which he found abandoned; and while there, the Earl of Ulster, with a new army of thirty thousand foot and four hundred horse, came to join the king, and complete the triumph of the English arms. The monarch continued his progress to Perth without opposition; and messengers arrived at that town from Baliol, announcing his submission, and imploring peace. Edward disdained to treat with him in person, but informed him that in fifteen days he intended to advance to Brechin, and that on Baliol's repairing to the castle there, the Bishop of Durham would announce the decision of his lord superior. This was none other than an absolute resignation of himself and his kingdom to the mercy of the conqueror, to which Baliol, now the mere shade of a king, without a crown, an army, or a nobility, dejectedly submitted; and the ceremony of his public penance was performed in the church-yard of Strickathrow, accompanied by every circumstance of feudal disgrace which could be suggested by the barbarous ingenuity of the age. Being brought into the presence of the Bishop of Durham and the English barons, mounted on a sorry horse, he was commanded to dismount; and on his treason being proclaimed, they proceeded to strip him of his regal ornaments. The crown was snatched from his head; the ermine torn from his royal mantle; the sceptre wrested from his hand, and everything removed from him belonging to the state and dignity of a king. Standing then on the bare ground, clothed only in his shirt and drawers, and holding a white rod in his hand, he confessed his treason against his liege lord; deplored his being misled by evil counsellors into a declaration of war against England; acknowledged the justice of his punishment; and not many days after, in the castle of Brechin, he resigned his kingdom of Scotland, its people and their homage, into the hands of his liege lord Edward, of his own free will and con-

sent. After this humiliating ceremony, Baliol delivered his eldest son to the King of England as a hostage for his future fidelity; and this youth, along with his disrowned father, were soon afterwards sent by sea to London, where they remained for three years in confinement in the Tower.

Thus ended the miserable and injurious reign of Baliol, a prince whose good dispositions might have insured him a happier fate, had he been opposed to a less terrible and ambitious enemy than Edward the First; or had the courage and spirit, in which he was not deficient, been seconded by the efforts of a united ability.

In his victorious progress through the country, Edward, with a short-sighted policy which was natural to a rude age, endeavoured to carry off or to obliterate everything which was connected with Scotland as an ancient and independent kingdom. He took with him to England the famous stone chair of Scone, in which, from very remote time, the Scottish kings had been inaugurated on the day of their coronation; and which, with superstitious veneration, had been regarded for many centuries as the national palladium. He carried off the crown and sceptre, and plundered the monasteries of their earliest charters and historical documents, which, we cannot doubt, contained evidence of the existence of Scotland as a wholly independent kingdom. Having concluded his expedition, which, from the siege of Berwick to the surrender of Baliol, occupied little more than three months, Edward held his parliament at Berwick, on the 28th of August, 1296, where he received the homage of the clergy and the nobles, with such of the lesser barons and free vassals as chose to obey his summons; and proceeded to settle with great ability, and in many points, with a laudable attention to justice and moderation, the government of his new dominions. The most galling measures were the garrisoning of the various castles with English troops, and their delivery to English captains and governors. In other respects, no capricious or abrupt changes were introduced; the ancient jurisdictions remained; no wanton acts of rigour were committed; and they who held office under Baliol were suffered to continue. John Warenne, Earl of Surrey, was made governor of the kingdom. The office of High Justiciar was committed to William Ormesby, and that of treasurer to Hugh Cres-

ingham, an avaricious ecclesiastic. Henry Percy, nephew of the Earl of Surrey, was appointed keeper of the county of Galloway and sheriff of Ayr; instead of the ancient great-seal of Scotland, a new seal, with the arms of England, was committed to Walter Aymondesham, an English chancellor; and a new exchequer, formed on the model of that at Westminster, was appointed for the receiving of the king's rents at Berwick. These various officers immediately repaired to Scotland; and Edward, with the pride of successful conquest, and the satisfaction of having accomplished the great object of his ambition, returned in triumph to England.

Bruce, Earl of Carrick, who was in the service of England, reminded Edward of his promise to place him on the throne. "Have I nothing to do," said the haughty monarch, "but to conquer kingdoms for you?" Judging it probably a more fitting occupation, he empowered the Earl of Carrick and his son, the younger Bruce, to receive to his peace the inhabitants of their own lands of Carrick and Annandale. How little did he then think that the youthful baron, employed under his royal commission in this degrading office, was destined, at no distant day, to wrest from him his conquest, and to become the restorer of the freedom of his country!

Such is a brief outline of the scenes of usurpation and national distress, amidst which William Wallace passed his youth. He had witnessed as a boy, the independence, the security, and the happiness of his country, under the reign of Alexander: and the contrast which he now beheld was calculated to rouse the feelings in a heart, which, from its earliest stirrings, even his enemies allow to have been animated by a love of liberty, and a hatred of tyranny and dissimulation, that nothing but death could extinguish. We will now proceed with the details of his history.

CHAPTER III.

Wallace retires to the Woods. Organizes a System of Warfare. Annoys the English in their Quarters. Contest at Beg. Dress and Armour of Wallace. Anecdote.

WALLACE, who had been outlawed by the English as a robber and murderer, considered it necessary for his safety, after the disastrous battle of Dunbar, once more to withdraw to his former retreat among the mountains and woods, from whence he would, no doubt, observe the ostentatious pageant of the feudal power of England, as it traversed his beloved country in all the insolent security of conquest. And while the distress caused by the usurper deepened around, and every tale that reached his secluded retreat, was fraught with tidings of the misery of his enslaved and degraded countrymen, the resources of the enemy, and the possibility of bursting the disgraceful chains imposed upon the land of his nativity, formed the subject of his anxious and unceasing reflections. Young as he was, he had observed, that the defeats his countrymen had sustained in the field, was not from a want of courage, in which they were, at least, equal to their enemies, but from a want of subordination and discipline among themselves. He was also aware of the jealousy and treachery which existed among the nobility, and he lamented their readiness to stoop, in the most debasing manner, to the will of the usurper, if they might thereby obtain a temporary exaltation of their party; but he was not aware, perhaps, of the venality of the nobles, most of whom had been bought with the gold of Edward. His reflections led him to conceive, that, if it was possible to unite together, a few resolute and patriotic spirits, allied to no faction, but like himself, attached to the common good; more could be done towards the restoration of his country's independence, than by all the tumultuous hordes, which the treacherous and disunited chieftains could bring together, even if they were desirous for their country's freedom. Fully impressed with this conviction, his days and nights were

passed in extending the numbers of his friends and coadjutors, and in organizing a system of warfare best adapted for annoying the enemy, which was destined in a short time, to shake the security of the triumphant Edward, by spreading terror and dismay among the invaders. The friends of freedom in every district were instructed and disciplined in a manner peculiarly his own. With the simple and well-known sound of his bugle-horn, he could regulate all their operations. When danger appeared, he could disperse them to seek more secure retreats—or call them together as circumstances might require. This mode of discipline, to make it uniform, he extended, either by himself, or some of his trusty associates, over a great part of the Lowlands of Scotland; so that, either amidst the fastnesses of Carrick, the deep recesses of Gartland, or on the shores of Loch Lomond, the rallying note of their country's liberator was well known, and followed the speedy appearance of well-armed warriors at their respective places of muster.

The extraordinary prowess which he had frequently displayed in his encounters with the English—his almost miraculous escape from their toils—and the prophetic announcement given out by the Seer of Ercildoune, of his being destined to deliver Scotland from the tyranny of England—all conspired to excite the hopes, and gain him the confidence of the less wealthy but most numerous classes of his countrymen.

His tactics were admirably qualified for harrassing the foes he had to contend with. The castles and fortalices in their possession were all surrounded by secret enemies, ever on the alert to discover and convey to their leader any information that might enable him to cut off their convoys or surprise them in their fancied security. It was in vain the warders kept watch on their lofty towers; distant as the eye could reach no enemy could be descried, no foreboding sound met their ear, to warrant them in disturbing the tranquillity of the joyous revellers within. Far in the woodlands, it is true, the sound of a horse might be heard; but it passed away unregarded as proceeding from some lonely forester going his rounds. The drawbridge is lowered to admit fuel or provisions for the garrison;—the loads are thrown in the entrance of the gate so as to render escape im-

possible;—the porter is done to death by the stroke of a dagger, and the carriers bristle into resolute and well-armed assailants;—the wine-cup is suddenly dashed from the hand of the governor, as he is about to apply it to his lips, who is only made sensible of his situation by the carnage that ensues;—the castle demolished, and the spoil divided among his followers, who are now allowed to return home. Wallace, meanwhile, attended, perhaps, by a few chosen associates, in whom he has confidence, pursues his way, to call forth the avenging swords of his adherents in some remote part of the kingdom. Such were the results of that admirable system of warfare which our hero was engaged in explaining and enforcing at the meetings of his nonjuring countrymen during the winter of 1296, and which it has been proper to allude to at this stage of his history, in order that the reader may be able to comprehend the possibility of several of those exploits which afterwards obtained for the dauntless assertor of his country's rights, the applause and admiration of mankind.

The spring of 1297 had scarcely set in before the wandering parties thus formed commenced operations in molesting the invaders; and so persevering and successful were their attacks, that in a very short time, throughout the whole of Clydesdale, Wallace and his followers held undisputed sway; and emerging from parts least expected by the enemy, surprised and cut off their convoys, after reducing them to great distress for want of provisions. The English garrison, which occupied Bothwell Castle, made several attempts to expel them from their concealments in the woods, but all their efforts had ended in discomfiture and disgrace; while the prisoners who were captured by the Scots were hung at different parts, along the skirts of the forest, as a warning to all hostile intruders. The proceedings of the patriots alarmed and perplexed the English, as it kept them in profound ignorance of the numbers they had to cope with. Left to their own conjectures, their frightened imaginations peopled the impenetrable recesses of the forests with myriads of fierce and merciless enemies, headed by an implacable chief, against whose sword the strongest of their armour afforded but feeble protection.

While the Scots guerilla parties were thus engaged, Wallace received intelligence from some of his active ser-

vants, that a strong convoy was on its way from England for the supply of the garrison of Ayr, under the command of Fenwick, the person who headed the attack so fatal to our hero's father. Roused by the hope of avenging the death of his father, and, at the same time annoying the enemy, Wallace determined to way-lay the party. For this purpose he selected fifty of those of his associates on whose strength, fidelity, and courage, he could place the greatest reliance; and thus attended, he set forward to occupy a position on the road he knew the enemy had to pass. It was night when the little band of patriots reached the spot from which they intended to make their attack; but hearing nothing of the advance of Fenwick and his party, he ordered his men to take shelter for the night in a neighbouring wood. The morning was pretty far advanced when two spies, whom Wallace had despatched at daybreak, returned with the intelligence that the enemy was at hand. Having arranged his men for the onset, his chaplain, John Blair, offered up prayers for the success of their adventure, which were scarcely concluded when the glittering spears of the enemy came in sight. Fenwick, on observing the small body of Scots that apparently awaited his approach, felt perfectly assured of making them his prisoners, along with their own far-famed chieftain, and carrying them in his train to Ayr; and congratulated himself on the satisfaction which the capture of the audacious outlaw would afford to his superiors. This pleasing day-dream was, however, unceremoniously disturbed by a rapid movement of the Scots, who, charging with their long spears, threw his advance into confusion, and, following up their advantage with the most daring intrepidity, carried disorder into the very centre of his squadron; where, undismayed by the vast superiority of numbers opposed to them, Wallace and his brave companions fought with all the exasperated fury of lions. The repeated charges of the English were repulsed and returned with such determined vigour and resolution, as thoroughly alarmed and confounded their commander. Wherever he turned his eyes, the sword of the redoubted Scottish chief—the man whom he most feared—seemed clearing a path towards him; helmet after helmet disappeared beneath his ponderous weapon; and the whole exertion of his mighty arm seemed directed towards the hated Fenwick. Conscious of the justice of that vengeance which

inspired our hero with more than usual ferocity, the English chief would gladly have avoided a personal encounter. His attempts, however, to escape his dreaded fate were unavailing—the brand of the vengeful Scot reached him at last; and the blow, though broke by the intervening sword of a trooper, fell with a force sufficient to strike him from the saddle. Falling on the opposite side of his horse, Wallace had not the opportunity of dealing him the death-blow;—this was an honour reserved for Robert Boyd, one of his most intimate companions, who fully revenged the death of our hero's father. Although their commander was thus slain, yet, the English continued the contest with great obstinacy, under one Bowmond, who was second in command, and made great efforts to retrieve the advantages they had lost. The Scots, however, maintained their ground with inflexible resolution, while the sword of their indomitable chief was rapidly increasing the gaps in the ranks of their enemies. Adam Wallace, of Richardtown, uncle to Wallace, had the good fortune to come in contact with the leader of the English; and after an obstinate engagement, the gallant Bowmond fell, covered with wounds, beneath the hands of the intrepid Scot. Deprived of both their leaders, the English now fled in the utmost confusion, leaving upwards of one hundred dead upon the field. The Scots pursued them only so far as to make their victory certain; and returning to the spoil, found their labours amply rewarded. A numerous train of waggons, loaded with flour, wine, and all sorts of provisions for the luxurious Percy, with warlike stores in abundance, and two hundred draught-horses, besides money and other valuables, fell into the hands of the conquerors, and appropriating part of it to the relief of the oppressed inhabitants in the neighbourhood, departed to secure the remainder in their inaccessible retreats among the extensive forests of Clydesdale.

The result of this conflict with Fenwick's party was not more encouraging to the Scots, than prejudicial to the English. The valuable convoy which the latter had been deprived of in this manner, was a subject of the deepest regret to Percy;—more particularly as it appeared irretrievable—his foraging parties having already exhausted the district under his control, and reduced the inhabitants to the most wretched expedients, in order to maintain

their miserable existence. His fields remained in a great measure uncultivated; and those among the commons who were fortunate enough to possess a cow, endeavoured to conceal her as their only treasure. The poor starved animal was bled as often as nature would permit, and the blood, boiled to a consistency, formed almost the sole support of the miserable owners. Percy, already aware of the impoverished state of the country, had husbanded the resources of the garrison, in order to make them hold out till the arrival of the expected supplies. Under these peculiarly distressing circumstances, his disappointment may be easily conceived, when the straggling remains of the anxiously-looked-for party arrived at Ayr, without a leader, to give an account of their disaster to the already half-famished soldiers, every man being allowed to tell his own story; and, as might be expected, all of them agreed in exaggerating the number of the Scots, and the gigantic stature, and incredible strength of their chief. Let Percy view the matter in what light he chose, he could only see the distressing situation in which he was placed;—a numerous garrison upon the point of starvation, in the midst of a hostile country as destitute of the means of support, was the dismal picture presented to him, torn which way he might. The uncertainty of procuring supplies, he had already witnessed; and to bring them by sea was equally precarious, as the Scottish ships were still numerous on the coasts, and had not acknowledged the superiority of Edward, but in the unsettled state of the country continued to capture all the English vessels that came within their reach.

In this battle, which was fought at a place called Beg, above Allanton, in the parish of Galston, few of any note among the Scots were slain. The statistical account says—“Among other antiquities there may be mentioned a place called Beg, where the brave Wallace lay in a species of rude fortification, with only fifty of his friends, yet obtained a complete victory over an English officer, of the name of Kenwick, who had two hundred men under his command. This gallant hero, it is well known, had several places of retirement towards the head of this parish, and in the neighbourhood, some of which still retain his name to this day. Wallace-Hill, in particular, an eminence near Galla-Law; a place called Wallace-Gill,

in the parish of Loudon; a hollow glen, to which he probably retired for shelter when pursued by his enemies."

Some historians, more remarkable for their love of the marvellous than of the truth, have boldly asserted that Fenwick had five hundred men under his command; but amongst all the authorities we can find to which we can give credence, two hundred is the greatest number; and we think the odds quite sufficient against fifty to entitle this to be styled a daring adventure, which few leaders would be found rash enough to undertake.

The curious reader may not be displeased by our presenting some account of the dress and armour in which Wallace appeared at the battle of Bannockburn. The following quaint description from the *Minstrel* is given with a minuteness which causes us to consider it as a literal translation from the work of Blan, so unfortunately lost; it also agrees with the description elsewhere handed down of the kind of armour in use at the period:—

"A habergione and his gounne he war
A steyle caplyne in his bonet but mar;
His glowis of plait in cloth war couerit weill
In his doublet a clous color of steyle;
His face he kept, for it was our bar,
With his twa handis, the quhilk full worthi war."

The "*habergione*," was a piece of defensive armour early in use among the Scots, and even worn by some Highlanders and Isle-men so late as the seventeenth century. It was a sort of chain or ring-mail, extremely light and flexible, allowing the greatest freedom to the motions of the wearer, whether on foot or horseback. It was variously constructed according to the taste of the wearer. The most approved were those brought into Scotland by the crusaders, in the beginning of the reign of Alexander III. They consisted of four rings joined to a fifth, and all well rivetted;—they were sometimes double. During the period of Wallace, they appear to have been in general use both in England and Scotland. They were formed like shirts, and were impervious to an arrow.

The "*gounne*" which Blind Harry alludes to, we conceive to be the surcoat, or coat of arms—a fashion introduced into Britain in the thirteenth century. Dr.

Meyrick thus describes it:—"The surcoat, which had been adopted by the crusaders in the thirteenth century, to prevent their armour being heated by the sun's rays, a mode still continued by the Mamelukes in Egypt, was at first of merely variegated patterns, but soon became embellished with the same armorial bearings as the shield;—hence the expression 'coat of arms.' It was a long, loose dress, without sleeves, open before and behind, for the convenience of riding, and girted round the waist by the *cingulum militare*, or belt. It was put on over the hauberk, and reached to the neck; and when the hood was placed on the head, it was covered by it as far as the shoulders. The front and back were emblazoned alike."

The surcoat appears to have been the same as the tabard, which is thus taken notice of by Hearne: "*Tabard*, a jacket, jerket, mandilion, or sleeveless coat, worne in times past by noblemen in the warrs; but now only by heralds, and is called their coat-of-arms in service."

Verstegan informs us that "*tabert* was anciently a short gown that reached no further than the mid-leg, that it remaineth for the name of a town in Germania and the Netherlands, and that in England it is now the name only of a *herald's coat*." Stowe, in his "Survey of London," in making mention of several fair inns in Southwark, takes occasion to speak of the Tabard Inn, as the most ancient of them, and writes thus: "Amongst the which innes, the most ancient is the Tabard, so called of the signe, which, as wee now terme it, is of a jacket, or sleevelesse coate, whole before, open on both sides, with a square collar; winged at the shoulders; a stately garment, of old time, commonly worne of noblemen and others, both at home and abroad in the wars; but then (to wit, in the warres) their armes embroidered, or otherwise, depict upon them, that every man by his coat of arms might bee knowne from others: but now these tabards are onely worne by the heralds, and bee called the coates-of-arms in service."

The "steyle capleyne," or iron hat, which had a rim and convex crown, and was worn over the hood. "After being placed on the head, it was kept from twining round, when struck, by cords, with which it was fastened to the shoulders. The effigy of Sir Roger de Trompington not only gives its form, but shows that it was sometimes held to

the body by means of a chain. It was ornamented, in front, with a cross fleury, the transverse bar of which was pierced by ocularia, or openings for the sight." The one worn by Wallace does not seem to have had this advantage, as, according to Blind Harry, "His face he kepit with his twa handis."

The limbs of our hero were defended by being encased in boiled leather, on which knee-plates of iron, and guards for the shin-bones, were fixed; these, with a round or triangular shield, formed his defensive armour:

His favourite weapon was a long and ponderous two-handed sword, which his great strength enabled him to wield with the greatest ease. The mace and spear was also at times used by him; and for close rencounters, in castles or other confined situations, he was furnished with a dagger for each hand, of a particular description, having guards which extended above the wrist, between which the hand passed, and grasping a transverse bar about an inch from the spring of the dagger, the weapon projected from the centre of the fist like the horn of a unicorn. This sort of dagger was often attached to the arm-plate, by a kind of hinge, and could be folded back under the arm, between the wrist and the elbow, when not in use, and concealed and secured in that position by the cloth gloves which he appears to have worn over his "glowis of plant."

Having thus described the dress and equipment of Wallace, we shall conclude this chapter with the following anecdote respecting his strength and personal appearance; it is translated from Hector Boece, by the editor of Morrison's edition of Blind Harry, who thus introduces it:—"Though this author (Boece) in general is not much to be credited, yet it would be hard not to believe him in an instance which happened near his own time, and in which, if he had spoken falsely, he could immediately have been detected. The anecdote in another respect is curious, as it affords an example of longevity, not unsimilar to that of the Irish Countess of Desmond, who attained a still more advanced age.

"The date is the year 1430. At that time, James I. was in Perth; and, perhaps, having heard *Henry the Minstrel* recite some of Wallace's exploits, found his curiosity excited to visit a noble lady of great age, who was able to inform him of many ancient matters. She

lived in the Castle of Kinnoul, on the opposite side of the river, and was probably a widow of one of the Lords of Erskine, a branch of whose family continued to be denominated from the barony of Kinnoul, till about the year 1440. It was Boece's manner to relate an event as circumstantially as if he had been one of the parties engaged in it; I shall therefore give the anecdote in his own manner, by translating his words:—

“ ‘In consequence of her extreme old age, she had lost her sight, but all her other senses were entire; and her body was yet firm and lively; she had seen William Wallace and Robert Bruce, and frequently told particulars concerning them. The king, who entertained a love and veneration of greatness, resolved to visit the old lady, that he might hear her describe the manners and strength of the two heroes, who were admired in his time as they are in ours. He therefore sent her a message, acquainting her that he was to come to her the next day. She received the message gratefully, and gave immediate orders to her housemaids to prepare every thing for his reception in the best manner, particularly that they should display her pieces of tapestry, some of which were uncommonly rich and beautiful. All her servants became busily employed, for their work was in some degree unusual, as she had not for a long time been accustomed to receive princely visitors. The next day, when told the king was approaching, she went down into the hall of her castle, dressed with as much elegance and finery as her old age and the fashion of the time would permit; attended by a train of matrons, many of whom were her own descendants, of which number some appeared more altered and disfigured by age than she herself was. One of her matrons having informed her that the king was entering the hall, she arose from her seat, and advanced to meet him so easily and gracefully, that he doubted of her being wholly blind. At his desire she embraced and kissed him. Her attendants assured him that she was wholly blind; but that, from long custom she had acquired those easy movements. He took her by the hand and sat down, desiring her to sit on the same seat next to him. And then, in a long conference, he interrogated her respecting ancient matters. He was much delighted with her conversation. Among other things he asked her to tell him what sort of a man Wil-

William Wallace was? what was his personal figure? what his courage? and with what degree of strength he was endowed? He put the same questions to her concerning Bruce. Robert, she said, was a man beautiful, and of a fine appearance. His strength was so great, that he could easily have overcome any mortal man of his time; but in so far as he excelled other men, he was excelled by Wallace, both in stature and bodily strength; for, in wrestling, Wallace could have overcome two such men as Robert was.

“The king made some inquiries concerning his own immediate parents, and his other ancestors; and having heard her relate many things, returned to Perth, well pleased with the visit he had made.”

CHAPTER IV.

Gargunnoch taken and demolished by Wallace. The family of Bradfute oppressed by the English. Wallace's uncle summoned to Glasgow. Wallace captures the baggage of Percy. Various skirmishes with the English. Wallace slays one of his followers.

THE Scottish patriots being now plentifully supplied with all the necessary requisites for prosecuting their guerilla system of warfare, and animated to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by their previous success, became impatient for Wallace to prosecute hostilities against their oppressors; and he being a leader unwilling to restrain them in so holy a cause, soon found them sufficient opportunities to gratify their wishes to their hearts content.

At a small village in the neighbourhood of Stirling, called Gargunnoch, the English had erected a small fortification, or *peel*, which they had plentifully furnished with provisions and munitions of war. Some of Wallace's *secret* friends in that quarter, observed the carelessness which prevailed at times in setting the watch, and that the drawbridge was frequently left down all night, for the purpose of saving themselves trouble in admitting the workmen who were still employed about

it in the morning—and conveyed the information to their chief, who resolved to make himself master of the place the following night, with the intention of rendering the admission of workmen to the peel unnecessary for the future. Accordingly two spies were despatched to ascertain the probability of success; and if there was a favourable prospect they were to light a fire on a neighbouring hill. Towards evening a column of smoke was seen to ascend from the place appointed—it was the signal for the party to advance. Wallace instantly set his men in motion, and arrived in front of the object of their attack about midnight. The drawbridge was down as they expected, but to their disappointment the door was firmly secured within. Impatient at the delay this occasioned, our hero seized upon a heavy piece of timber, and rushing with it against the door, the fastenings inside gave way, and the stones not yet properly cemented, yielded to the violence of the shock; and nearly a yard of the wall came tumbling to the ground. The noise of the assault awoke the porter, who attempted him with a ponderous mace; but Wallace avoided the blow, and before the porter could recover his unwieldy weapon, laid him lifeless at his feet. The captain of the garrison now made his appearance, accompanied by the men under his command; but the Scots had made too firm a footing within the building to be easily expelled. After a short but sanguinary conflict, in which the captain was slain by Wallace, the garrison were put to the sword, with the exception of the women and children, who received from the conquerors as much kindness as could be expected in that rude age. The wife and three children of the captain, after being supplied with what necessities they required, were allowed to depart along with the other females—Wallace furnishing them with a passport, by which they could proceed in safety to any of the towns in possession of the English. The Scots found in the peel abundance of all kinds of provisions and other necessaries, with a large sum of money which Wallace divided equally among his followers, as was his wont; and after distributing part of the stores among his oppressed countrymen in the neighbourhood, he ordered the fortification to be demolished, and proceeded with his gallant band on their crusade against the invaders of their country; Wallace having frequently been heard to say

that he would never desist, if life was granted him, till he had seen his country's independence restored, and her enemies banished from her soil.

While Wallace was thus actively employed in harrassing the English, the calamities and oppressions with which certain families or individuals were visited did not escape his attention, neither did they fail to call forth that interference which their circumstances required; and amid the many cases of private suffering which came under his notice, none appeared to affect him more deeply than the desolation which had overtaken a respectable and ancient family in the neighbourhood of Lanark. Hugh Bradfute, a zealous advocate for the liberties of Scotland, possessed the lands of Lamington, and left them at his death to his son, who had imbibed, with all the ardour of youth, the patriotic principles so fondly cherished by his father. For some display of these praiseworthy feelings, he had incurred the displeasure of Heselrig, the English governor of Lanark, who found a pretext for attacking him in his castle, and putting him to death, along with several of his friends, who had come to his assistance. The house and lands of Lamington now belonged to his surviving sister, whose youth and beauty, assisted by her wealth, attracted the notice of the murderer of her brother; and the pretence of a regard to her safety obliged her to reside in Lanark. For this protection, Heselrig, who was no less avaricious than cruel, levied considerable sums from time to time upon her property; and these exactions not satisfying his cupidity, he intended her as a match either for himself or his son—it mattered little to him which, so as the property came into the family. The helpless girl had no means of averting this hateful connection, except pleading for delay, till her grief for her slaughtered brother had abated. Every indulgence of this kind was immediately granted by the *love-sick* tyrant, but always accompanied by a fresh exaction on her property, till the victim of his unrelenting avarice became an object of commiseration even to those who were themselves suffering under the hand of the cruel oppressor. The Minstrel draws a fascinating picture of this desolate orphan; and, as he is corroborated in what he says by other respectable authorities, we have no cause to doubt the assem-

blage of virtues and graces in which he has portrayed her person and character.

Wallace first saw this interesting lady while attending her religious duties at a church in Lanark. The beauty of her person, the grace and propriety of her demeanour, added to her destitute situation, excited in the bosom of our hero, the tenderest sensations; and he resolved to repay the governor, with interest, for the *protection* he so kindly granted to her. But other circumstances occurring at the time, served to withdraw his attention from the fair object of his solicitude for a time.

As it was found necessary by the English authorities in Scotland, to levy fresh assessments in certain districts of the country, for the purpose of defraying the immense expense requisite in supporting so many officers and soldiers, for protecting the peace of the kingdom, an extraordinary council of the sheriffs and governors were appointed to meet with the Bishop of Durham at Glasgow, which see this ambitious and not over scrupulous ecclesiastic now occupied to the exclusion of Wishart. The uncle of our hero, Sir Reginald Crawford, though long since deprived of his commission, was summoned to attend, as sheriff of Ayr. It is doubtful whether this was an indirect attempt to conciliate Wallace, whose name had now become a terror to the English officials, or if it was done on the supposition that the Scots would be more readily induced to submit to their imposts, if some of their countrymen appeared as the assessors. Whatever might be the reason, the sheriff prepared to obey the order; while his nephew, always suspicious of the English, resolved to take two of his followers, and while he watched over the safety of his relative, he would at the same time observe the motions of the enemy. The accommodations for travellers in those days were not very promising. With the exception of religious houses, such hostelry as might be found on the roads afforded them little more than shelter from the weather; and travellers, who intended to spend all night at such places of entertainment, were expected to bring their provisions and other necessaries along with them, particularly those who journeyed with retinues. On account of these circumstances Sir Reginald's party were provided with a sumpter-horse, to carry what was considered requisite on their journey.

They had not proceeded far, before they came up with the servants of Henry Percy, conducting his baggage. One of their horses having met with an accident on the road, they unhesitatingly stopped Crawford's party, and insisted on having their sumpter-horse, in order to supply the place of the one that was disabled. It was in vain to remonstrate with those who had the power, and were determined to use it. Wallace and his companions, from a distance, saw the load rudely thrown from the back of his uncle's horse, and the animal rudely forced away. The sheriff, in consequence, had to remain at Mearns for the night.

Percy's retainers, along with the baggage, had reached the vicinity of the little village of Cathcart, when they heard the noise of horses' feet in their rear, and on looking round, perceived Wallace and his two companions galloping towards them; but as there appeared to be only three coming against five, they prepared for their defence, if it should be the intention of the horsemen to attack them. They were soon satisfied on the subject. The contest, however, was soon decided, by the servants of Percy being made to bite the dust; and the English soldiers, from the loopholes of the neighbouring castle, saw their five countrymen slaughtered, and the baggage under their protection rifled or carried off, without venturing to quit their stronghold. The conquerors obtained money and other articles of value; and proceeded rapidly on their way in order to cross the Clyde at Glasgow, and thus effect their retreat into the Lennox, before Percy could receive any information of his loss.

Having effected their object in crossing over the Clyde they took the road towards Dumbarton, and sheltered themselves for the night amongst the hills of Kilpatrick, within sight of the castle of Dumbarton then in the hands of the English. In the morning they proceeded towards the shores of Lochlomond, where Wallace was joyfully received by the veteran Earl of Lennox, who, with his tenantry maintained amid the fastnesses of that wild district, a protracted, and sometimes a successful struggle for their independence. This nobleman was very desirous that Wallace should remain in that neighbourhood, offering him the command of his followers. This was considered by Wallace as too circumscribed a field for his exertions; and explained his plan of warfare to the gal-

lant chieftain, whom he gained over to his views, and induced him to co-operate in extending the spirit of opposition, as well as to create a more powerful diversion in favour of those who had already embarked in the insurrection. With this understanding, Wallace took his departure, accompanied by a number of his friends, who had resorted to him on discovering his retreat.

Percy was thunderstruck at the audacity displayed by Wallace, in thus, a second time, attacking and plundering his convoys; but his mortification was augmented by the other proceedings of our hero and his confederated band. An express had just reached Glasgow, announcing the fate of the garrison of Gargunnock, when another made his appearance, announcing the slaughter of a party of English in the neighbourhood of Doune. Sir Reginald Crawford, who was suspected of assisting his nephew in the murder of Percy's servant, and robbing his baggage, was put under arrest. But how to proceed farther, the council were at a loss. Sir Reginald was ordered before them, and charged with assisting his nephew, but he was enabled to prove an *alibi*. He was closely interrogated respecting his nephew's places of concealment, but could, not, or would not, give any satisfaction. He was then forced to take an oath against affording Wallace shelter, or holding any correspondence with him, directly or indirectly, so long as he remained under the ban of outlawry; and he was further sworn to afford the English all the information in his power, in order that the outlaw might be brought to punishment. The old man made no objections to swear to anything they asked him; he had the royal example of Edward himself, that oaths taken under peculiar circumstances were not binding—he swore, but, like Edward, he did not intend to abide by his oath.—Oaths were considered of no value by the Scots, when they were extorted by the English; and during that troublous period, they had sufficient proof of this assertion.

We will leave Percy and the Bishop of Durham to their deliberations, while we accompany Wallace and his followers to the depths of Methven wood, where they were also deliberating upon means for attacking a body of English troops, which were to leave St Johnstone, on the following day, as a reinforcement of the garrison of Kincleven castle. From the information Wallace had received, it was known that this reinforcement was to

consist of a hundred men, under the command of an old veteran knight, named Butler, who had rendered himself peculiarly obnoxious to the Scots, by his rapacity, and the cruelties he had inflicted upon them. Our hero being anxious to obtain all the particulars respecting this movement, disguised himself in the dress of a labourer in search of employment. In this guise he was introduced to the mayor of St. Johnstone, under a feigned name.—He performed his part of a lounging countryman with great art; and the magistrate, being highly entertained with his simple deportment and humorous conversation, as well as by the account which he gave of himself, he at once gave him permission to seek for the employment he pretended to have come in quest of. By this device, he obtained all the information he required, respecting the strength and condition of the garrison, and the intended removal of the troops alluded to: he hastened back to the wood, where he rallied his followers around him, and found them all eager for the enterprise.

Sir James Butler, who was generally well-known to the Scots, and was reckoned one of the oldest warriors in the English service, had on this occasion a hundred choice soldiers under his command. With this force he was quietly proceeding to the castle of Lincliven, when, from behind a rock that projected over the road, he was suddenly assailed by the Scots. The attack being quite unexpected, disconcerted the English commander; and before he could recover his troops from their panic, a fresh charge threw them into complete disorder. The strength and valour of Wallace rendered the advantage which the English possessed, in point of numbers, of little avail. It must, however, be admitted, that in this instance, the disparity was not so great as on some previous occasions—Wallace, according to several authorities, having upwards of fifty hardy and resolute warriors, determined on this, as on similar occasions, to conquer or to die: they had, in short, devoted their lives to the cause in which they were engaged. Carl, to whom Wallace had presented the steel mace taken from the porter of Gargunnock, admirably seconded the efforts of our hero, by the dexterity with which he wielded the formidable weapon. Sixteen of the enemy had fallen beneath the swords of the Scots; but the conflict was soon concluded, when Wallace came in contact

with Butler: the aged veteran was no match for the youthful patriot; and on seeing their chief fall beneath the sword of his adversary, the rout of the English became general. The disordered rabble fled in terror towards Kincleven, from the battlements of which their discomfiture had been observed; and those within hastened to lower the drawbridge, to admit their flying countrymen. Onwards came the confused mass of friends and foes—the shouts of the conquerors mingling with the distracting cries of the conquered, and thundering over the drawbridge, the pursued and the pursuers entered the castle together. The few soldiers who were in the place could render no assistance in making head against the enemy; and the whole garrison, with the exception of two priests, and some women and children, were put to the sword.

Having taken the necessary precautions against surprise, during the time they might remain, they cleared the place of the dead bodies of the English, and then proceeded to search the castle for booty, and found a considerable quantity of money, besides a plentiful supply of provisions and other stores. A part of this pillage they conveyed by night to Shortwood Forest, where they prepared pits and other places for its concealment, that it might be a resource against future emergencies.

The followers of Wallace were not as yet sufficiently numerous to allow him to put garrisons in those places of strength which fell into their hands. It was therefore determined to demolish every fortress that was likely to afford a shelter to their enemies, and Kincleven castle was razed to the ground; and after securing such of the iron-work as might be useful to them, the furniture and lumber were formed into piles, and, in the dead hour of night, the flames rose high in the air, announcing to those within some miles of the place, that the avenger of his country's wrongs was at his post; and early in the morning they learned the desolating vengeance which had overtaken their oppressors.

The priests, who were allowed to depart, proceeded direct to Glasgow, to add to the consternation of Percy and the Bishop of Durham, who were still deliberating upon matters for the *good* of the country, of which they had by this time discovered they were unwelcome inha-

bitants; and in no place were they secure from the exterminating vengeance of the daring outlaw. The women who had left Kincleven along with the priests, carried the melancholy intelligence of their disaster to St. Johnstone.

The grief and indignation which were felt among the English at St. Johnstone, on hearing the doleful tidings of the slaughter of their countrymen, induced the governor, Sir Gerald Heron, to permit Sir John Butler, son of Sir James, to follow the Scots with all the force of the garrison, to revenge the death of his father. In this enterprise he was joined by Sir William de Lorayne, an officer of reputation, and a great favourite with the soldiery.

Although the force under these leaders amounted to somewhere about a thousand men, the Scottish chief, by his management of his small handful of followers, kept them in ignorance of their own vast superiority. In the forest of Shortwood, a part of which the English endeavoured to invest, their provident enemy had formed a number of rustic fortifications, in the form of squares communicating with each other, the walls of which were made by affixing planks to the trunks of the trees, and filling up the spaces with branches. Each of these squares had a small opening towards the enemy, and another at the opposite side, for the purpose of allowing the pursued to retreat; while the advance towards them was intersected by defences of a similar description, in order to break, and otherwise prevent the approach of too numerous a body of the enemy. By this means, when the Scots found it necessary to retire to their entrenchments, they could only be pursued in broken and straggling detachments. These defences were not fully completed when the English came in sight; and Wallace, therefore, to gain time, appeared at a distant and almost detached part of the forest, with a few of his followers, leaving the rest under the command of Stephen of Ireland to complete their fortifications. On the approach of the English, an arrow, from the unerring hand of our hero, brought down one of their advanced guard. This had the effect, as he intended, of attracting their attention towards that part of the forest where he had stationed his little party, who also let fly their arrows among the English, though not with such good aim as their chief,

who continued to bring down his man as they advanced. The enemy having observed the opening at which Wallace made his appearance to discharge his deadly shafts, sent some of the most expert of their bowmen to lie in wait for him, while the others directed their arrows towards those parts where his men were supposed to be stationed. It was not long before the eagerness of Wallace exposed him to the practised hand of one of his watchful adversaries, whose well-aimed shaft, after grazing the collar of steel which he usually wore, stuck in the fleshy part of his neck. His keen eye, however, soon discovered his lurking foe; and hurrying to him, intercepted his retreat, and slew him in sight of his comrades, who were so struck with the boldness of the deed, that not one of them attempted to oppose his return to his associates. Although the Scots were generally thought inferior to the English in the use of the bow, on the present occasion, having the covering of the wood to shelter them from the superior number and direct view of their adversaries, they managed, by shifting their ground as their enemies advanced, to keep a desultory battle till after noon; during which time no fewer than fifteen of the English had fallen by the hand of Wallace, besides a considerable number by his followers; while the slight wound he himself had received was the only damage done to the Scots. Their arrows being all expended, and having arrived at a part of the forest where a high cliff prevented their retreat, Lorayne advanced upon them with about three hundred men, while Sir Gerald Heron and young Butler remained in the skirts of the forest, in order to prevent the escape of the fugitives. Wallace had only time sufficient to make a short pithy address to his companions; and placing them so as to have the advantage of the cliff as a protection to their rear, they stood prepared for the attack. The English were astonished to find themselves opposed to so small a number of the Scots as now appeared waiting the onslaught, and conceived they would have little else to do than surround the party and make them prisoners. But on this, as on former occasions, they reckoned without their host. The determined valour with which the Scots received and repulsed their attacks, convinced them that the labours of the day were not yet over. Wallace, who was always a tower of strength to his friends in the hour of danger, displayed on this occa-

tion more than his usual heroism. While the strength which nerved his resistless arm excited the greatest enthusiasm among his followers, and spread horror and dismay through the ranks of their enemies, Lorayne continued to urge his men on to the conflict, from which they as quickly receded, when they found themselves opposed to that champion of whose strength and exploits they had heard so many appalling accounts. The battle, however, still continued to rage with unabated fury on both sides;—the English, eager to revenge the slaughter of their countrymen; and the Scots, maddened with the injuries they had already sustained, determined to conquer or die on the spot. At this time their undaunted chief burst like a thunderbolt in the midst of the thickest of the English; and having scattered them before him, ascended a little hillock, behind which they had retreated, and applying his bugle-horn to his mouth, made the forest resound with a bold and animating signal. The English leader, conceiving that this was a species of bravado, rallied his forces, and led them again to the attack. Wallace and his little band were speedily environed by their enraged assailants, and the battle commenced anew, with, if possible, increased animosity. Though the Scots fought with the most obstinate bravery, yet some of them, from the severity of their wounds, appeared unable to continue the unequal contest much longer; but at this critical juncture, Stephen of Ireland and his party, in obedience to the well-known signal, suddenly appeared, and fell upon the rear of the enemy with equal vigour and ferocity. Surprised by so an unexpected attack, the English, dismayed, fled in the greatest confusion, followed by the Scots, who continued the pursuit, making dreadful carnage among them, till they arrived at the boundary of the forest, where the frightened fugitives met Sir John Butler, at the head of five hundred men. The Scots were now forced to retreat, in their turn, to their rustic fortifications—the first of which was soon carried by the enemy, but at the expense of a considerable number of their bravest soldiers. The English had now the mortification to find that their wily enemies had only retired to a second enclosure, from which Wallace, supported by a few of the most resolute of his followers, made a sortie; in which, after killing a considerable number of the enemy, he came in contact with Lorayne, and with one blow cut

him through his helmet to the chin. His terrified soldiers shrunk aghast from the ponderous weapon of their dreaded adversary; but pressed on by Butler, to avenge the death of Lorayne, they again crowded round the little phalanx of heroes. Again they were dispersed; and Butler, who led on the attack, came within reach of the gleaming falchion of the Scottish champion, which descended with such force as would have cut him to the ground, had not the branch of an intervening tree saved him from the blow; and his men, rushing forward to his assistance, carried him off before the blow could be repeated. The English were now so dismayed, by the death of one leader, and the disabling of the other, that they hastily fell back upon the troops left at the entrance of the forest, under Sir Gerald Heron, where a council of war was held, and wherein it was agreed that they should make a simultaneous attack upon the defences of the Scots. During the discussion of this question among their enemies, Wallace and his trusty companions thought proper to make their retreat by the opposite side of the forest, and retire to Cargill-Wood, a situation capable of affording them more natural advantages in securing themselves from their numerous assailants.

The English, on discovering the retreat of the Scots, commenced a strict search after the plunder taken from Kincleven Castle. But nothing could be discovered but the horse of old Butler, which had been left behind in one of the enclosures. They placed the wounded son upon his father's favourite steed, and the whole cavalcade returned, fatigued and dispirited to St. Johnstone, leaving one hundred and twenty of their companions dead behind them. Of the Scots, only seven were killed; but not one of them escaped without one or more wounds.

From an elevated situation, Wallace watched the English as they retired to St. Johnstone; and, though fatigued with the excessive labour he had undergone, and still smarting from the wounds he had received, returned at midnight to the scene of action, with a number of his companions, and dug up the most valuable part of the concealed booty, which they carried to their new retreat, along with whatever arms or other articles the light of the moon enabled them to strip from the bodies of the dead that lay scattered around them.

A few days after the above skirmishes, Wallace is said

to have returned to St. Johnstone in the disguise of a priest; and a story is told of his having been betrayed by a woman, with whom he was acquainted. Repenting, however, of the information she had given his enemies, she disclosed the danger that awaited him just in time to effect his escape. His foes, enraged at the disappointment, murdered the woman who had deceived them, and again set off in pursuit of him, taking along with them a sleuth-hound to assist them in discovering the retreat of their persecutor. A sanguinary battle was again fought, in which Wallace lost nine of his followers, and the English leaders upwards of one hundred. The remainder of the band of heroes now continued their retreat, with the intention of making Gask Castle.

In this retreat, Wallace killed one of his followers, named Fadyan, an Irishman, whom he suspected of treachery. This man had joined Wallace a short time previous to the attack on Kinclaven castle. He was a man of a reserved and melancholy character. Of this man, Blind Harry gives the following unprepossessing description:

“

“To Wallace that come ane that hecht Fawdon;
Melancoly he was of complexioun,
Hewy of statur, dour in his countenance,
Sorrroufull, saide, ay dreidfull but plesance.”

Neither Wallace nor his soldiers were acquainted with this man's history; but his strength and courage made him a useful, though unpleasant associate. So far as it had been tried, his fidelity could not be seriously impeached, but his temper was fierce and sullen; he uniformly shunned any intimate communication with his fellows, and the mystery in which he shrouded himself at times, awakened suspicions, which were not easily repressed. This gloomy man formed one of the party who retired to Shortwood Forest; but while the others were enjoying themselves after their victory, he kept himself aloof: and it is not improbable that a suspicion of Fadyan darted into the mind of Wallace, when he found his little band in the presence of the superior numbers of the English, led on by Butler and Lorayne.—But when Wallace, with the remainder of his followers, were now retreating towards Gask, hotly pursued by the English, who had also a sleuth-hound upon the traces of the

fugitives, who were mostly worn out and wounded, and Wallace himself, though fresher than his companions, was in a state of fierce excitement, produced by rage and disappointment, and every moment they were ready to be overtaken; at this crisis, when the delay of a few minutes might have been fatal, Fadyan, pleading fatigue and exhaustion, refused to move farther. Wallace returned to where he stood, sullenly declaring his resolution to remain. A moment was spent in kind entreaty, the next in earnest remonstrance, but to no effect; when the sword of Wallace, who was worked up to a paroxysm of fury and suspicion, descended on the neck of the unhappy wretch, and severed his head from his body. Scarcely, however, had this unjustifiable vengeance been executed, when the chief experienced that revulsion of remorse and pity, which is natural to generous minds surprised by passion; and, although the near baying of the hound proclaimed the imminency of the danger, he would have remained upon the spot, had not his soldiers insisted that he should provide for his safety. So far, indeed, was the party from feeling any dissatisfaction at the conduct of Wallace, that Stephen of Ireland and Curle lingered behind, and, favoured by the shades of night, which had now set in, mingled with the enemy; and while their general, Sir Gerald Heron, was stooping to examine the body of Fadyan, whose blood arrested the progress of the sleuth-hound, Curl, watching his opportunity, gave him a mortal stab in the throat with his dagger. The cry of "Treason!" arose among the English; but, in the confusion, the two confederates slipped down, unobserved, among the brushwood that surrounded them, and made the best of their way towards Loch Earne, the wooded banks of which offered them every chance of security.—In the meantime, Wallace and his thirteen followers, all that were now left him, made good their retreat to the deserted castle of Gask, situated in the middle of a wood. This place possessed few advantages that could recommend it as a desirable retreat; but to men in their desperate situation, the prospect of a shelter from the swords of their enemies was a considerable relief; and though it appeared in a sad state of dilapidation, a number of the apartments were entire, and the court-yard was surrounded by a wall of great thickness, which, broken as it might be in some parts, would, nevertheless, enable them

to make a tolerable defence, if necessary. They therefore determined to secure themselves for the night, and trust to their good swords for a path through their enemies in the morning.

CHAPTER V.

Wallace's Reflections. Singular Adventure in Gask Castle. Kills Sir John Butler. Miraculous Escape. Interview with his Father's Brother. Skirmishes with the English.

AFTER the confusion consequent upon the death of the English leader had in some measure subsided, a party of forty men were despatched with the dead body to St. Johnstone; and Butler, who had so far recovered from his wounds as to be able to take the field, remained at the head of five hundred men, to look after the fugitives. With this force he proceeded to secure all the neighbouring passes, and to take such other steps as he deemed necessary to prevent their escape.

Meanwhile Wallace and his few remaining friends had put their place of refuge in as good a state of defence as its ruinous condition would admit; and having procured a sheep from a neighbouring fold, they kindled a fire in the court-yard, and prepared for their evening repast. Wallace now wisely considered, from the fatigue his followers had undergone during the day, that however much they might be in want of refreshment, a few hours repose would be absolutely necessary for recruiting their wearied frames and exhausted spirits, and rendering them fit for the arduous enterprise that awaited them. As soon, therefore, as they had allayed their hunger, he ordered them to betake themselves to rest, while he undertook to keep watch by himself.

Surrounded by his sleeping companions, with no light but what the decaying embers afforded, the mind of Wallace became overshadowed with melancholy forebodings. At this trying moment, in the stillness and solemnity of midnight, feverish and exhausted, yet compelled to watch, and conscious that he was surrounded

by his enemies, his mind sunk into despondency, and his fit of remorse for the murder of Fadyan again seized him with more violent paroxysms of anguish than before. As he trimmed the expiring embers, or busied himself in cleaning his weapons, he started back from the sight of his hands; they were still red with blood, not of his enemies, but of one of his own soldiers, who had steadily served him, till exhausted by wounds, his strength, and not his faith had failed him. If such was his conduct to Fadyan, what confidence could his soldiers have in a leader of so fierce and vindictive a disposition; what security could he have in himself, if the dying remonstrances, and feeble appeal of a brave soldier, mortally wounded in his cause, had failed to stem the torrent of his blind and furious passion? But a few hours therefore, and there was not one of the hardy partisans who now lay around him, but would willingly have sacrificed his life in his service; but now, which of them would do this for a leader, who so lightly regarded their perils and privations; who, on the slightest symptom, not of willing, but of involuntary disobedience, was ready, in the ruthlessness of his discipline, to become their executioner? All these miserable reflections rushed rapidly through the mind of Wallace, as his men disposed themselves to rest; and his imagination seems to have been worked up to a state of morbid excitement, which was increased by the awfulness of night, and the lonely habitation in which he found himself. Suddenly, however, he was awakened from this miserable reverie by the loud blast of a horn, which sounded on the outside of the castle, and startled his soldiers from their slumbers. One of these immediately ran into the forest to ascertain the cause of the alarm; he did not return, however. Two of his companions being sent to make the same inquiry, were detained, like him, by some unseen enemy; and Wallace, becoming greatly alarmed, despatched one messenger after another, to bring him intelligence, till he was left alone in the ruined hall. The blast now grew louder and more terrible, and with his sword in his hand he rushed to the door of the apartment, but his retreat was here cut off by a dreadful vision. The ghastly figure of Fadyan holding his own head by the hair confronted him in the entry, and as he started back in horror, the spectre cast the gory missile at his murderer! Wallace, uncon-

conscious of what he did, yet mechanically brave, caught it by the clotted locks, and was about to assault the spectre, but next moment, under the terror, that he was in the presence of a spirit or a fiend, he leapt from the window of the hall, and fled far into the wood. There, in an agony of despair, and overcome by a secret upbraiding that his cruelty and his crime had caused him to be deserted by heaven, and abandoned to the persecution of the enemy of man, he cast himself on the ground and uttered the most bitter lamentations, when a sudden light shone through the dark forest, and, starting up, he saw the deserted castle of Gask blazing in one wide conflagration, and the figure of Fadyan, with a beam or rafter in his hand, standing on the wall, relieved upon the white sheet of flame, and superintending, as it were, the work of destruction. In this singular adventure, which it is easy to account for on natural causes, we recognise the influence of remorse and superstition working upon a generous mind, naturally powerful, but bred up in that belief of supernatural agencies, and disembodied spirits, which was cordially embraced in those remote periods, and which, we are sorry to add, is scarcely eradicated in our own more enlightened times.

Though the horns still continued to sound, Wallace was too cautious to reply, suspecting it to be a wile of the enemy for the purpose of entrapping him, but wandered about the forest, searching in silence for his missing companions, and fearing the worst. His efforts were unavailing, and, as the morning dawned, he found himself on the verge of the forest. Here he was observed by Butler, who had rode out to view his posts, who challenged him; and being dissatisfied with the answer returned, drew his sword, and spurred forward his steed. Wallace advanced from under the shade, which partly concealed him, and presented to the astonished Butler the daring foe he was in quest of, and prepared to fall back on his nearest position. His retreat, however, was anticipated by a blow, which unhorsed him, and before he could recover himself the sword of his powerful antagonist had levelled him with the dust. Our hero had just reached the stirrup of his fallen enemy's horse, when he observed an Englishman, fully armed, advancing to him at full speed, with his spear in rest. By a dexterous management of his

horse he avoided the charge; and whilst his foe, unable to recover himself, was hurrying past, he gave him a blow on the neck with his sword which sent him headlong to the ground. The alarm was now spread among the English, whom Wallace observed collecting from various quarters, in order to intercept his retreat. Giving the rein to his horse, he shot like an arrow through a straggling party of horse, that seemed the least formidable, but who, on recovering from their surprise, set off in close pursuit, followed by the whole of their party.

This was a race with Wallace for his life; and from his superior knowledge of the country, he was frequently enabled to distance his pursuers; yet the avidity they showed in keeping up the chase, obliged him several times to turn and act on the offensive. As he took care that this was always done in situations where he could not be surrounded, those that were most forward suffered for their temerity; whilst the suddenness and fury of his repeated attacks spread a panic to the rear of his pursuers, from the idea that he had received a reinforcement of his countrymen. Before the evening had set in, upwards of twenty of the English were strewed along the line of his retreat; and those who were in advance were very cautious in approaching within reach of his powerful arm. A rising part of the ground had, for some time, hid him from their view; and when they again came in sight of him, he was leading his jaded and breathless charger up a steep and rugged pass between two craggy precipices. Though he was soon again obscured in the shades of twilight, from the exhausted state of his horse, they saw little probability of his being able to effect his escape. Having with difficulty followed in his track, they found on descending a precipitous defile, an extensive morass spread before them, far as the eye could penetrate, at the edge of which lay the steed of their late commander, expiring from the wounds and fatigue it had encountered; but the object of their pursuit was no where to be seen—he had obviously made his escape, but none knew how; he had not had time to traverse the extensive plain before him, upon which appeared nothing that could secrete him from their view, and they concluded that he had effected his escape by some supernatural means. Strong piquets, however, were sent out in every direction, but all their exertions were fruitless; and they returned to their head-

quarters about midnight, without obtaining the slightest trace of the fugitive.

In the early part of this volume we mentioned that Wallace had spent his youthful years with his uncle, an ecclesiastic, at Dunipace, in Stirlingshire. Though still young when withdrawn from the protection of this safe retreat, yet his mild and affable manners while there had procured for him the friendship of all his relatives, servants and dependants. He was a particular favourite of one of the former, who, now, a widow, lived with her family, consisting of three sons, in a secluded part of the Torwood, at that period an extensive forest in Stirlingshire. Wallace had found protection in the cottage of this good woman in former difficulties; and thither he now determined to proceed. It was midnight ere he reached the place, and the inmates were surprised by the well-known signal of our hero at the window of their lowly dwelling. Never had his faithful friends observed him in such apparent distress,—he was worn-out with fatigue, weak from hunger, his armour stained with blood, and his dress drenched with water—all combined to show the hardships and perils he had undergone.

After giving his pursuers the slip at the morass, by his previous knowledge of the country, he crossed over to the other side, and proceeded towards the Forth. The enemy were in great force, however, at Stirling, which compelled him to pass over the river at Cambuskenneth, and with much difficulty, on account of his fatigue and the weight of his armour, succeeded in gaining the opposite bank; after which he proceeded more at his leisure, satisfied that he had avoided his pursuers.

There was an oak of huge dimensions in the neighbourhood of the widow's cottage, in the cavity of which he had formerly found security from the pursuit of his enemies, when the search was too eager to permit him to remain within doors; he, therefore, on the present occasion, after partaking of that refreshment his situation so much required, repaired to this friendly shelter. He despatched one of the good woman's sons to inform his uncle of his present condition, and to request his assistance; while another was sent off towards the scene of his late conflicts, to gain some intelligence of his lost companions, and conduct them to him. The third, and

youngest of the widow's sons remained as a watch over him while he slept.

Wallace slept soundly, and the morning was far advanced before he was awakened by the sound of voices, and, starting to his feet, found two of his protectors in conversation with the friend of his childhood, the brother of his father. His uncle took him apart from their companions, and inquired earnestly into his situation and his prospects; he pointed out to him, at the same time, the numerous dangers and difficulties he was likely to encounter if he still continued to persevere in his endeavours to banish the usurper from his country, more especially while he was so ably supported by those dastard nobles who appeared to glory in their chains. "Your friends and followers" added he, "are now either slaughtered or dispersed, and all your endeavours in those places you have been in have not procured you a single friend to supply the place of those you have lost; the booty you have taken has either been recovered by the enemy or left in places where it would be madness in you to endeavour to regain it. Besides, were you even as successful as your fondest wish could suggest to your honourable mind, in driving the tyrants from our beloved country, do you imagine that so powerful, so ambitious a prince as Edward, who sets at defiance the laws both of God and man, aye, and of honour too, the most favourite and accomplished warrior of the age, would allow himself to be despoiled of his laurels by the son of an obscure Scottish Knight? Would not the whole force of his mighty kingdom, assisted by his kerns from Ireland, and from Wales, which he has already enchained, as well as by our own brave but dishonourable and venal nobles, be poured upon our devoted country with an irresistible force? Have we not already experienced his most barbarous and unjustifiable cruelty too much to think of increasing our misfortunes by fresh provocations, when we might expect to see renewed the terrible butcheries of Berwick in all our towns and villages? Listen, then, my dear son, to what I have received authority to propose to you. You know well, that those men—our nobility—whose duty and interest it was to have defended our beloved country from the power of the aggressor, have succumbed to our enemies, and are permitted to wear their chains in peace; if you will there-

fore, give over your fruitless hostility to Edward, and acknowledge him as your liege lord, you will be received to his friendship, for he knows and respects bravery in whatever situation it may be found, and in place of being compelled to skulk from covert to covert, you will become the highest in the land, the next in power to himself in your native country."

Wallace prevented his uncle from proceeding further. "My situation," said he, "is gloomy enough at present; but my prospects are not what you appear to imagine. The loss of my gallant friends is as yet my only cause for regret; but I know where the sound of my horn can still call forth a band of resolute spirits, enemies to oppression, as will enable me to revenge their fall. The liberty of our country is my sole end, and that is well known to my friends; who also know that I have never been backward in exposing my life in the quarrel. That liberty, which an unprincipled usurper, has deprived us of, was the birth-right we inherit from our forefathers, and which undoubtedly belongs to our posterity, to whom it is our bounden duty to transmit it entire. If we should •perish in doing this, we will perish in doing what is right; and that just God, who cast our lot in a band of freedom, will preserve us from those scenes you dread, if we show ourselves worthy of his protection. If, on the other hand, we basely surrender what we only hold in trust for our children, our punishment, for defrauding them of their inheritance, the galling yoke of slavery, will be but a just retribution. As to your proposal, come from whom it may, you may inform them that I despise it from my inward soul—that the destruction of a single enemy of my country's independence, affords me more satisfaction, than all the power, or all the wealth, that the haughty tyrant could bestow. I place my trust in God, and in that trust, I will endeavour, though opposed by all his mighty power, and by all our renegade nobility, or by all the shackled slaves he can bring against us, to burst the chains—that now enthrals poor Scotland, and tear the laurels from his unworthy brow. This you may inform those who sent you upon this disgraceful errand, will be my endeavour through life, and doubt not by the help of God to accomplish it. I will not acknowledge Edward as my liege lord, though he should give me the crown of Scotland for so doing—I would rather be a peasant in

freedom, than a monarch in chains; and for these opinions I am indebted to you, dear uncle. "Have you forgot," said he, while his stern but beautiful features relaxed into a smile, "the *amor patriæ* which you instilled into my bosom,—have you forgot

Dico tibi verum Libertas optima rerum:
Nunquam servili sub nexu vivito, fili."*

have you forgot those holy truths which you were at such pains to impress on my mind in the peaceful days of my childhood, when peace was in all our borders, and every man sat under his own vine and fig-tree, enjoying the fatherly protection of a worthy sovereign, and no one to make him afraid? And we are now to yield up our necks to the slavish yoke, without at least making an effort to bring again those days to our poor desolated and bleeding country. You may inform your employers also that there is only one condition, on which I will make peace with the tyrant, and that is, the full and complete renunciation of his usurpation—grant me that and I will be his friend—refuse and I will be his enemy through life." Before he had concluded, the recollections of the past crowded upon the mind of the good old man, and with streaming eyes he embraced his well-beloved kinsman, whose high resolutions he did not again venture to alter, but earnestly hoped that his patriotism would be rewarded.

Stephen and Curle, accompanied by a son of his kind hostess, broke in upon the conversation of Wallace and his uncle. Wallace was overjoyed at meeting with these two faithful followers, whom he considered as having fallen into the hands of the enemy during their retreat to Gask castle; mutual congratulations and expressions of satisfaction had passed between them, before communicating to each other the events that had occurred to each since their separation; and after our hero had introduced his friends to his uncle, they received the benediction of the priest, and returning thanks to God for his protection in times past, and supplications for future assistance, they retired to consult upon their present state of affairs.

• We have already remarked that Percy and the Bishop

* I tell you a truth, Liberty is the best of all things:
My Son, never live under any slavish bond.

of Durham had imposed an oath upon Sir Reginald Crawford prohibiting him from in any way assisting his nephew, or in any way holding correspondence with him; a similar oath had been forced upon his other relatives and several of his friends; but as we then showed in what consideration oaths were then held by the conduct of Edward, we need not be surprised that, although they had no personal communication with our hero, they still persevered in showing him proofs of their affection and esteem. On the present occasion his hostess was made the instrument of communicating to him those proofs of friendship.

Having, by her means, been plentifully supplied with money, and horses for himself and his companions, they set forward, accompanied by two of the widow's sons, whom she freely devoted to the service of their country, towards these districts where they expected a more cordial co-operation than they had experienced in the neighbourhood of St. Johnstone.

At the suggestion of his uncle, Wallace visited Dundaff castle on his way to Clydesdale. This fortress with the lands of Dundaff, Strathblane, and Strathcarron, belonged to Sir John Graham, a tough old warrior, who in his early years had recommended himself to the High Steward of Scotland by his brave conduct at the battle of Largs. His son and heir received, in his youth, the honour of Knighthood at Berwick, on account of his gallant behaviour in a border feud with the Percies of Northumberland. Wallace and his companions experienced the most unbounded hospitality during the three days which he passed at Dundaff; and the gallant old chieftain observed with delight those feelings of admiration and friendship with which his son viewed the patriotic assertor of his country's independence. Before the departure of Wallace, the young Sir John, with the hearty consent of his father, devoted himself to the cause of Scotland's regeneration, by swearing fidelity to our hero as his chief, and would have instantly accompanied him on his mission, but it was deemed more prudent that he should remain at Dundaff, till he was made acquainted with the number of supporters Wallace could muster in Clydesdale, and what prospects he might have for carrying into effect his chivalrous designs. In the meantime, however, he was to hold himself in readiness to advance, with his father's vassals, who were all friendly

to the cause, as soon as he should receive the summons. After mutual expressions of friendship, Wallace and his followers proceeded on their way, and lodged the first night in Bothwell, in the house of one of his adherents, named Crawford, who gave him every information respecting the state of the country, and the strength of the enemy in that quarter. The succeeding night he arrived at Gullbank, in the neighbourhood of Lanark, where he remained with a near relation of his own, who entertained him kindly despite the oath that had been imposed upon him; and from this place he despatched Curle to the west, and Stephen of Ireland to the north, to apprise his friends of his present situation, and appoint a time and place where he might meet with them.

After the departure of his two messengers Wallace assumed the disguise of a countryman, and went into the town, where he was rejoiced to hear it circulated among the English that he had been slain by his own followers. This rumour, he had no doubt, was occasioned by his pursuers finding the body of Fadyan; but although Percy, and the English leaders refused to believe what they so earnestly desired, there was a degree of credit attached to it by the English, particularly those then situated in the upper part of Clydesdale, that caused less attention to be paid to our hero when he appeared among them. Of this feeling he now took advantage in the frequent visits which he now made to Lanark. We formerly alluded to an attachment Wallace entertained for a persecuted young lady of that place, who was suffering from the exactions of the avaricious governor. The history of this love-affair of our hero is involved in deep obscurity. It is supposed, however, by those ancient writers, who have taken notice of the subject, that the parties had been privately married shortly after the battle of Beg, during the time that he remained in the forest of Clydesdale, and that the ceremony was performed by his friend and chaplain, John Blair. But, as his situation was too precarious and attended with too much danger to allow him to remove her from her present residence, his visits were therefore made with the utmost secrecy, in such disguises, and at such times as would best enable him to escape the notice of his enemies. Meanwhile he did not allow his sword to remain idle; but, along with his companions,

were always on the watch for stragglers from the English quarters; and as they always attacked them in places where none could escape, their mysterious disappearance caused great alarm among their countrymen. In the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, even to this day, various anecdotes are related regarding the exploits performed in that quarter. Among others there is one still handed down, on the severe retaliation he inflicted on a party of Englishmen, who, happening to come to the same inn at which Wallace and his companions were refreshing themselves, had played off a barbarous attempt at what they considered waggery, by cutting off the tails of the horses belonging to the Scots. They were not aware at the time that our hero was of the number, otherwise they would have been more cautious; but they paid dear for their temerity. Blud Harry, in alluding to this circumstance, gives us the following address which Wallace is represented as having made to their captain before cutting him down with his sword; it may be considered as no unfavourable specimen of the humour of the man:—

“Gud freynd abid
 Service to tak for thi craft in this ’tyde.
 Marschell, thou art without commaund of me;
 Rewaird agayne, me think, I suld pay the;
 Sen off I laitt, now come owt off the west
 In this cuntre, a barbour off the best
 To cutt and schaff, and that a wondyr gude;
 Now thou sall feyll how I oyss to lat blude.”

And so saying he slew the cruel offender.

A similar transaction is said to have occurred at Lochmaben, and that Wallace was afterwards pursued by Sir Hugh Moreland, who traced the fugitives to Knockwood by the blood that dropped from their horses' tails. At this place Wallace was joined by sixteen of his friends who had been lurking in the wood, an engagement took place, in which the English, though greatly superior in numbers, were totally routed; and Sir Hugh, with upwards of twenty of his men, were slain. This account is confirmed by a tradition still current in the neighbourhood; and is thus noticed in the Statistical Account of the parish of Kirkmichael: “There are several indistinct remains of ancient fortifications, but no tradition about

any other than a small fort in Knockwood, called Wallace's house, said to have been thrown up by Sir William Wallace after he had slain Sir Hew of Moreland, and five of his men, at a place still named from that event, the *Sax Corses*, i.e. the six corpses, and where there are two or three large stones which seem to have been set up in memory of some great transaction." Tradition may be generally relied on when it marks the spot where any remarkable occurrence has taken place; yet the circumstances connected with it are often erroneously stated. The rude defence alluded to, under the name of Wallace's house, may have been either hastily formed during the advance of Sir Hugh and his soldiers—as they are represented having been seen for some time before they reached the position occupied by the Scots—or more probably it may be the remains of some strength used in former wars. Wallace and his followers only appear to have availed themselves of it to protect them for the moment from being overpowered by their numerous assailants; for, immediately after the victory, they were compelled to leave Knockwood. Those Englishmen, who had been fortunate enough in making their escape, fled to Lochmaben Castle, where they alarmed the garrison, and a detachment of three hundred horse were ordered to go in pursuit, under the command of one Graystock, an officer lately come from England, with a strong reinforcement of troops to fill up the vacancies which Wallace and his faithful band had made in the various garrisons. This officer, like the generality of his countrymen in England, was ignorant of the talents and prowess of the man he was sent in pursuit of; he upbraided his fugitive countrymen with cowardice, when they recommended him to be cautious in conducting his advance upon so subtle an adversary; and bent on punishing the insolent freebooter, he spurned at their advice, and pressed forward with the greatest expedition to his ruin.

Wallace and his companions having possessed themselves of the horses of their fallen enemies, were preparing to advance into Clydesdale, near the confines of which, Wallace had appointed to meet his faithful adherents, Stephen of Ireland and Curle, when the formidable body of men, under the command of Graystock, came in sight, at full gallop. Wallace immediately ordered his men to form, and retire with deliberation, taking care to

preserve their horses, while he remained in the rear, to repress any sudden attack which might be made by their enemies. As the English advanced, our hero, mounted on the horse of Sir Hugh Moreland, kept in front of them, and rode with so much ease, occasionally looking over his shoulder, that an uninterested spectator might have been led to suppose, that he was rather acting, as a guide to the English party, than watching for a favourable opportunity of attacking them; while the terror of his name prevented any of them from moving from their ranks, and his consummate *sang froid*, had even damped the ardour of their fiery leader. They had thus followed the retreating Scots for some time, when the English officer ordered a movement, by which he expected to be able to surround the handful of men in advance of them. At this moment, Sir John Graham suddenly appeared at the head of thirty well appointed horsemen, followed by Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, a rough, old warrior, who in obedience to the message sent to him by the trusty Stephen, had taken the field with twenty of his vassals, all well armed. These worthy confederates were received with three hearty cheers, which struck dismay into the hearts of their pursuers. Wallace set the example to his friends and followers, by charging through the centre of the enemy; his friends pushed forward, and soon completed the confusion which he had commenced. The left wing of the English was thrown into disorder before the impetuous charge of the Scots; and Sir John Graham and Kirkpatrick were busily employed in pursuing and cutting down the flying soldiers, when our hero made up to them, and represented the impropriety of killing the men, while they were allowing their leaders to escape; pointing out to Sir John, a party of the enemy amounting to about one hundred, which Graystock was endeavouring to preserve entire, and recommended to him, as his horse were still in good condition, to charge and disperse them. Graham speedily arranged his little squadron, and prepared with alacrity, to execute the commands he had received. Wallace, wishing to be present at the execution of his orders, was soon in the midst of the fray. The charge of Graham was too impetuous to be withstood; and when our hero reached them, he found Graystock engaged in single combat with the young knight of Dundaff. The conflict was doubtful for a few

moments, but the superior strength and dexterity of Graham, soon brought the English officer to the ground; and the fall of their leader was a signal of flight for his followers, who sought refuge in Knockwood, from which the Scots had so lately retired.

Wallace hastily recalled the victors from the pursuit, and having collected them around him, he complimented them on the valour they had displayed, and proposed, that they should immediately attack the castle of Lochmaben; where, besides, the honour they would achieve, and the benefit they would confer upon their bleeding country, they would be certain of obtaining sufficient plunder to reward them for their labour. The proposal was joyfully received, and without waiting for refreshment of any kind, they instantly set out on their expedition, under the guidance of a person well acquainted with the numerous intricacies of the country surrounding the object of their intended attack.

As had been expected by Wallace, the fortress was confided to the charge of the porter, and a few invalids, who were unable to accompany their comrades in the expedition against Wallace; they were easily overpowered. They found the castle well stored with abundance of everything their situation required; and while regaling themselves after their previous fatigues, the remains of their discomfited enemies were observed approaching the castle. They were immediately admitted, and indiscriminately put to the sword—not one being left alive to carry the doleful tidings of their overthrow.

The fortress which had thus unexpectedly fallen into his hands, was deemed too important an acquisition to be destroyed; he therefore left it in charge of Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, and a small garrison, while he took his departure, accompanied by Sir John Graham, his two steadfast adherents, Curle and Stephen of Ireland, and a few other worthies, for the forest of Clydesdale.

CHAPTER VI.

Crawford Castle burned. Wallace returns to Lanark. Murder of the Heiress of Lamington. Wallace revenges her Death. The Barns of Ayr. Defeat of the Bishop of Durham.

LOCHMABEN CASTLE was the first fortress in which our hero ventured to place a garrison; and he was only enabled to do this in consequence of the great numbers of his countrymen who were flocking to his standard from all quarters, encouraged, no doubt, by the rumours of his successes, as well as to escape from the persecution of their intolerant enemies.

Edward continued to prosecute his warlike intentions against France, while the formidable insurrection was thus widely spreading in his lately acquired conquest.—The accounts of Wallace's successes reached him from time to time, and arrested his attention in the midst of his victories; and although he considered himself too secure in the possession of Scotland, to feel any immediate apprehension from the attempts of the freebooter, as he was pleased to designate the patriotic leader of the Scots, he deemed him such an enemy as it would not be altogether prudent to neglect, and if possible to bring him to that condign punishment his treason so well merited. He therefore thought it expedient, during his absence on the continent, to give orders to his government at home, that those officers entrusted with the management of Scottish affairs should be liberally supplied with all the requisite necessaries, as well as men to enable him to keep possession of that country, or to bring the disaffected entirely under his rule. Neither did he forget to order a sufficient reward to be proclaimed for the apprehension of Wallace, *who was to be kept a prisoner till his return home.* This was, as we say in Scotland, getting the fish before he caught it.

According to the orders of Edward, the requisite supplies had been forwarded to the various garrisons; and part of these had only reached Lochmaben two days before the late attack; and our hero learned that the

garrison of the castle of Crawford were in daily expectation of their share of the promised supplies.

As this fortress had been the property of his maternal ancestors, he considered his claim upon it to be more just than those who had it now in possession, and therefore resolved upon making himself master of it as well as the expected supplies. In crossing a moor which led to the castle, he stopped a woman, from whom he learned that the garrison, which consisted of only twenty men, who were at that time carousing in an hostelry in the neighbourhood of the castle; he proposed to Sir John Graham to attempt a surprise; and, for this purpose, directed him to follow, at some distance, with the men under his command, while he, with a companion, went forward to observe the condition of the revellers. On approaching the door of the hostelry, the speakers were sufficiently audible for him to hear that it was himself and his exploits that was the subject of conversation; Captain Martindale, the leader of this watchful garrison, declaring to the men under his command the satisfaction which the presence of the outlawed freebooter would give him—that his fortune would be made, and he would be able to enjoy himself where he chose, without being confined to that beggarly country. The captain was pot-valiant, and as most of his men were in a similar condition, they were all willing to partake in the pleasure of capturing him whose head would make all their fortunes. Finding himself in such request, the fearless Scot walked into the middle of the apartment. The “Benedicites” on both sides were exceedingly brief. Wallace, after introducing himself to the company as the man they were most desirous of seeing, plied his sword with his usual ability; and, aided by his companion, soon overpowered the maudlin captain and his intoxicated men. Sir John Graham, who had reached the door during the conflict, was ordered off to secure the castle; which duty was very easily performed, as its defenders were lying lifeless in the hostelry in the neighbourhood.

The house in which the above action took place is still to be seen in the village of Crawford-John. It continues to be occupied by the descendants of the individual who then kept it. They continued to rent it for upwards of two hundred years, when one of them, who was piper to the proprietor, received a perpetual lease of the house,

and a small portion of ground attached to it, for some piece of service he had performed. The room in which the adventure occurred is at the end of the building nearest to the ruins of Crawford castle. The occupants from time to time have successfully endeavoured to keep the house in preservation. The ditch into which the dead bodies of the English were thrown is still pointed out, from which human bones have been dug within the last few years.

But to return.—The expected supplies had not arrived at Crawford, neither had our hero time to wait for their arrival. Having therefore divided what booty was found among his followers, and setting fire to the castle, Wallace returned to Lanark, in order to concert measures for removing from that town the object of his affections, and placing her in some secure retreat, less exposed to the avarice of Heselrig.

Our hero, on this occasion, for the more effectually escaping the notice of his enemies, who were by this time fully aware that he was still in life, covered his armour with a mantle of green cloth, which he fastened round him with a belt, from which hung his sword. At the entrance of the town his dress, but more particularly the uncommon length of his sword, attracted the attention of some of the soldiers belonging to the garrison; and one of them, more forward than his companions, endeavoured to lay hold of it. Wallace evaded the attempt to deprive him of his weapon, when a sarcastic dialogue ensued. Blind Harry says—

“ Ma Sotheroune men to thanae assemblit ner—
Wallace as than was laith to mak a ster.
Ane maid a scrip, and tyt at his lang sworde;
‘ Hald still thi hand,’ quod he, ‘ and spek thi word.’
‘ With thi lang suerd thow makis mekill bost.’
‘ Tharoff,’ quod he, ‘ thi dame maid littel cost.’
‘ Quhatt causs has thow to wer that gudlyc gryene?’
‘ My maist causs is bot for to mak the toyne.’
‘ Quhat suld a Scot do with so fair a knyff?’
‘ Sa said the priest that last janglyt thi wyff;
That woman lang has tillit him so fair,
Quhill that his child, worthit to be thine ayr.’
‘ Me think,’ quod he, ‘ thow drywyne to scorn.’
‘ Thi dame has beyne japyt or thow was born.’ ”

But this dialogue soon ended in blows; and the English,

seeing their companion no match for the brawny Scot, rushed upon Wallace from all quarters. Wallace, finding himself surrounded, he was roused into fury, and dealt his blows about him with terrible and fatal energy. His long and ponderous sword, which had so attracted their attention, descended with rapid and deadly effect upon the head-pieces of the foe, who were retiring in confusion before his irresistible arm—no doubt conceiving they were contending with something supernatural—but upon others arriving, some of whom, unacquainted with the enemy, rushed headlong to the fray. Experience soon taught them caution, when young Heselrig came on with a fresh party to their assistance. Heselrig knew Wallace, and spread the information among the soldiers, who, although eager to obtain the promised reward, yet dreaded to encounter the prowess of his fearful arm. While his enemies, thus reinforced, were preparing to surround him, a door opposite to him suddenly opened, and a fair hand beckoned him to approach. Wallace did not hesitate to embrace this opportunity of escaping; and the door being instantly shut against his enemies, he was embraced by his dear Marian, who showed him the means of saving himself by an outlet behind the house.

For this ready aid the unfortunate woman lost her life. Old Heselrig was not in Lanark at the time of the affray; but his son having sent him a most exaggerated account of the disturbance, he hastened to town, and immediately caused the heiress of Lamington to be brought before him, determined to punish her by a fresh exaction on her estate, as well as to force her to inform him of the hiding-place of Wallace. She was brave as he was vicious, and all his threats had no effect upon her inflexible resolution—his fair promises of advancement had as little effect upon her virtuous mind, as she laughed his threats and his promises to scorn. Finding it impossible to gain any information from his victim, or even an acknowledgment that she had done wrong—nay, on the contrary, she gloried in the deed—the inhuman wretch, in a paroxysm of rage and disappointment, ordered her for instant execution.

This visit was a mere personal adventure of Wallace, and therefore he had none of his companions along with him. Wynton informs us that our hero, from his place of concealment, had the heart-rending misfortune to be a

spectator of the execution of his mistress; which would not have been the case, if he had, as Blind Harry says, been attended by Sir John Graham, and his thirty men. But no sooner was the murder perpetrated, than he repaired in search of his associates, to assist him in revenging the atrocious deed; and that very night, having collected thirty of his followers, to whom he announced the melancholy tale, and with them he approached the town in silence, for fear of disturbing the garrison. At the dead hour of night, he reached the governor's lodgings: it was a room or loft, constructed, like most of the buildings of those times, of wood, and communicating with the street by a stair. Up this Wallace rushed, and with a kick burst the door from its hinges; and the iron-grasp of Wallace awakened Heselrig from his sleep, when he observed our hero standing before him in full armour, and with his naked weapon in his hand. Gasping for breath, the affrighted officer with difficulty asked who he was, and whence he came? "I am William Wallace," he replied, "whose life you was so anxiously seeking yesterday; and now I am come unthought, and thou shalt answer for my poor maiden's death." With these words, he dragged his naked victim from the bed, and, passing his sword through his body, he threw the bleeding wretch down the stair into the street, where he was immediately slain. The alarm speedily spread, and the garrison was soon engaged with Wallace and his little party; but the inhabitants of the town, incensed at the general conduct of the governor, and disgusted with the barbarous murder of the heiress of Lamington, rose in a body against their oppressors, who, unable to stand their ground against the infuriated crowd, were glad to make their escape from the town, many of them almost in a state of nudity.

The inhabitants of Lanark, by this act of justice against murder and oppression, having identified themselves with the cause of patriotism, saw no alternative left them but to join heart and hand with the avenger of their country's wrongs; and the number of true patriots, from the middle and lower classes of the people, that now flocked to his standard, enabled him to take the field openly, and bid defiance to the enemy. Indeed, so formidable was the force under his command, that a few days after executing justice upon the governor of Lanark, he met a

considerable body of the English in the neighbourhood of Biggar, with whom they had a regular engagement, and defeated with great loss, after a contest of about two hours. This was the first regular battle his partisans had engaged in, and he had every reason to congratulate himself upon their courage and discipline. It has been alleged by some historians that Edward commanded in person upon this memorable occasion; but such could not have been the case, as at that period he was engaged with his enemies in France. But that an engagement did take place there can be little doubt, from the following notice in the Statistical Account of the Parish of Biggar:—"At the west end of the town is a tumulus, which appears never to have been opened; and there are vestiges of three camps, each of a roundish figure, at different places in the neighbourhood. There is a tradition of a battle having been fought at the east of the town, between the Scots, under Sir William Wallace, and the English, who were said to be sixty thousand strong, wherein a great slaughter was made on both sides, but especially among the latter."

These accounts, we are convinced, are decidedly at variance with truth, which we are enabled to rectify by a direct reference to history, both English and Scottish. It does not appear to us that the English amounted to more than eight, or, at the most, ten thousand men, who were under the command of Lord Whichenour. On the side of the Scots, who were upwards of five thousand, Sir Walter Newbigging commanded a body of cavalry. His son, David Newbigging, at that time not more than fifteen years of age, held a command under him; and the well-tryed military talents of the father were not disgraced by the gallant efforts of the young patriot, whose bravery on this, his first field, was afterwards rewarded by the honour of knighthood, by the hand of our hero himself. The family of Newbigging came originally from England; and Sir Walter and his son, on this occasion, found themselves opposed to their near kinsman, the English commander.

Wallace now kept the field at the head of what might be called an army, when compared with the miserable handful who formerly adhered to his desperate fortunes; and the celerity of his movements confounded the most studied calculations of the enemy. While the main body

of his forces appeared engaged in their entrenchments, occupying the attention of the English, distant garrisons were surprised, and put to the sword by foes who appeared to be raised by enchantment, as they seldom had the slightest intimation of their approach.

About this period, one of those iniquitous acts, so frequently met with in the cold-blooded and relentless policy of Edward, was perpetrated at Ayr, against the barons and gentry of Scotland. This part of the country had been the nucleus, as it were, of the insurrection; and the ill-disposed, and well-affected inhabitants of the district had become equally objects of suspicion to the usurper's government.

While Percy was at a distance from his government, and the Bishop of Durham lay at Glasgow, it would appear that a temporary truce had been entered into between Wallace and the English officers, who held the chief command in their absence, in the expectation of the Scottish party that a complete surrender of the liberties of their country was to be the result. Under the colour of treating of peace, Sir Reginald Crawford, the uncle of our hero, Sir Bryce Blair, a baron of ancient lineage, who had joined the patriots along with Sir Neil Montgomery, and other Scottish lords, were induced to attend the council of the English, which was held in a large wooden building, or barn, near the town of Ayr. Each of these Scottish barons, as he entered, unarmed, and unsuspecting of any treachery, was rudely seized, and led to instant execution; and as the precaution had been taken to fill the building with a large force of English soldiers, whilst all without appeared fair and honest, the horrid butchery was carried through in silence and security; indeed, even if the alarm had been given, the Scots would have found it impossible to rescue their deceived friends. It is impossible to condemn too severely this brutal and treacherous transaction. On a broad joist, or rafter, which supported the roof of the building, the Scottish barons, who had unsuspectingly attended the council, under the solemn protection of a truce—a protection sacred amongst uncivilized nations—were hanged, without one being allowed to escape; and Wallace, who had himself nearly fallen into the snare, found his party deprived, in a single day, of some of the dearest and bravest of his companions. But enough were left him to

take ample revenge; and the Black Parliament of Ayr (the name by which this fatal council, in which the Scottish leaders had perished, was called) was succeeded by a scene still more terrible.

Wallace no sooner heard of the diabolical proceeding than he determined on severe retaliation on the assassins. Selecting fifty of his chosen confederates, he hastened to the spot, and being joined by a number of the retainers of the murdered gentlemen, they surrounded the buildings where the English were lodged; and these, like the houses in Scotland at the period, were entirely composed of wood. The English, indulging in fancied security, arising from the terror which they imagined the late severity was likely to impress upon the Scots, had, after a deep carousal, betaken themselves to rest, little dreaming of the awful vengeance that awaited them, proceeding from that very cause which they deemed their security.

Favoured by the darkness of the night, and the state in which he found his enemy, Wallace had sufficient time to heap up a quantity of pitch and dry wood around the buildings, and to fasten the doors on the outside, without alarming the victims whom he had devoted to destruction. So deliberately had the plan been executed, that the doors of those houses in which the strangers lodged had been marked by a spy employed by our hero, to distinguish them from the houses of his own countrymen; and having drawn his men around the spot, so that none should escape, the chief now commanded the fire to be applied, and in a few moments the whole quarters were enveloped in one fierce and unextinguishable blaze. Of all the English, who had so lately triumphed in the death of their enemies, not a man escaped; all either were slain by the soldiers of Wallace, as they attempted to rush from the doors, or perished by throwing themselves from the windows, or met a more terrible death in the midst of the flames; and the Scottish leader, having offered up this human hecatomb to the souls of his dear companions who had perished at Ayr, collected his forces, and retired from the shocking scene. It is said that upwards of five hundred of the English perished in this dreadful manner. The severity of the retribution can only be palliated by the nature of the war the parties were engaged in, and the desperation to which the

cruelty of the invaders had goaded on the wretched inhabitants. If tradition may be credited, Wallace did not remain till the flames were extinguished; for, when about two miles on his return, at an elevated part of the road, he is said to have caused his men to look back on the still blazing scene of their vengeance, remarking, at the same time, that the "barns of Ayr burn weel." The ruins of a church are still to be seen on the spot where our hero and his followers stood to take their last look of the flames, and which is called from this circumstance "*Burn weel Kirk*."

As this is a portion of the history on which some writers have thought proper to be sceptical, Dr. Jamieson, in his valuable notes on the Life of Wallace, remarks, "The history of the destruction of these buildings, and of the immediate reason of it, is supported by the universal tradition of the country to this day; and local tradition is often entitled to more respect than is given to it, by the fastidiousness of the learned. Whatever allowance it may be necessary to make for subsequent exaggeration, it is not easily conceivable, that an event should be connected with a particular spot, during a succession of ages, without some foundation."

The testimony of the "*Complaynt of Scotland*," a national work, written in 1548, is corroborative. Speaking of the King of England, the writer says:—

"Ony of you that consentis til his fals conquest of your countre, ye sal be recompensit as your forbears var at the blac parliament at *the bernis of Ayre*, quhen Kyng Eduard maid ane convocacione of al the nobilis of Scotland at the toun of Ayre, vnder colour of faitht and concord, quha comperit at his instance, noeht heff and suspitione of his treasonabil consait. Than thai beand in his subiectione vnder colour of familiarite, he gart hang cruelly and dishonestly, to the nummer of sexten scoir of the maist nobilis of the cuntre, tua and tua, ouer ane balk, the quhilk sextene scoir var cause that the Inglismen conquest sa far vithin your cuntre."

The author refers to this as a fact universally acknowledged among his countrymen, although it must be recollected, no edition of the Life of Wallace was printed for more than twenty years after this work was written. He introduces it again, as a proof of treachery and cru-

elty, which still continued to excite national feeling. A few pages after the above quotation, he says:—

“Doubtles thai that ar participant of the cruel inuasion of Inglismen, contrar thare natyue cuntraye, ther craggess sal be put in ane mair strait yoik, nor the Samnites did to the Romans, as Kyng Eduard did til Scottismen at the blac perliament at *the bernis of Ayre*, quhen he gart put the craggis of sexten scoir in faldonis of cordis, tua and tua ouer ane balk, of the maist principal of them.”

About the period of the burning of the barns of Ayr, Sir William Douglas, one of Wallace's principal supporters, was prosecuting the good cause in a different part of the country. The first important advantage which Douglas appears to have gained, was by a spirited and successful stratagem against the castle of Sanquhar, a place of considerable strength in the county of Dumfries, and commanded by an English captain named Beaufort. The Scottish lord found means to corrupt a countryman, (no difficult task we should imagine,) whose duty it was to supply the garrison with fuel; and this man having consented to lend his dress and his carts for the purpose, Thomas Dickson, a bold and trusty retainer of Douglas, threw the coarse frock over his armour, and covering his steel basnet with a bonnet, which completed his disguise, drove his carts across the drawbridge, and beneath the portcullis, in such a way that it was impossible for the garrison to lower the iron door. When all was thus ready, Dickson cast away his disguise, stabbed the porter at the gate, and sounding his horn as a signal to Douglas, who lay with his men in ambush at a short distance, that chief rushed in, and made himself master of the castle, putting the whole garrison to the sword. That system pursued so successfully by Wallace, and afterwards by Bruce, of destroying and rendering untenable the fortress which had fallen into his hands, was not adopted by Douglas, who imprudently shut himself up in this stronghold, and was soon after beleaguered by a force which the English sent from the neighbouring castle of Dredier. He succeeded, however, in communicating his distress to Wallace, who, at this time, lay in the mountainous district of the Lennox, and instantly proceeded to his relief, accompanied by Sir John Graham. Upon the approach of the Scots, the English drew off

from before Sanquhar, but Wallace was in time to attack the rear of their division in the wood of Dalawinton, and to cut off from the main body a party of five hundred men, who were put to the sword. He thus relieved Douglas; and as he found himself in a hostile district, where the Comyns, who belonged to the party of Edward, held the chief sway, he removed to a situation more favourable for his operations.

In the darkness of authentic history at this period, and the uncertain glimmer of tradition, it is exceedingly difficult to discover the real events which took place. It is clear, however, from the evidence of the English historians, that the successes of the Scots, under Wallace, gave the most serious alarm to the officers of Edward; that Desdier, another castle of great strength, fell into the hands of Douglas; and that, under the encouragement of the High Steward and his brother, the spirit of insurrection became so popular, and spread so rapidly, that great numbers of the English were openly massacred in almost every district beyond the Frith of Forth, then denominated the Scottish sea. Knighton, a contemporary historian, who received his information from eye-witnesses of the transactions, tells us that the Scots "having collected together their whole force, they no longer kept to the woods, but openly marched through the country, cruelly slaying every Englishman whom they could lay hands on beyond the Scottish sea, and afterwards attacking the fortresses and castles."

About the same period, Wallace commenced a severe persecution of the English ecclesiastics, who had possessed themselves of Scottish livings, and employed their wealth and influence in intriguing against the independence of the country. Among the many other unjust acts of Edward, he had early ordered that all parishes which fell vacant in Scotland should be filled by persons of English birth; so that many of the richest livings, stalls, and deaneries, were occupied by intruders who could not fail to be particularly obnoxious to the insurgents. When the Scots reflected upon the many thousands of their countrymen, of all ages, who had already been butchered at the siege of Berwick and the battle of Dunbar—the oppressions that had followed the apparently interminable war entailed upon them in support of the pretended proofs of the supremacy of England—it is not to be won-

dered at that they should attempt to get rid of these canker-worms who had nestled in their country, and ungratefully betrayed its sacred and most valuable interests. Against these foreign clerks, an edict of banishment had been passed under the brief government of Baliol; but the subsequent reduction of the country by the English monarch, restored them to the livings and dignities from which they had been ejected, and once more filled the land with the willing agents of the conqueror. Under such circumstances, it was perfectly natural for Wallace to revive the edict of Baliol; and it was not to be expected that individuals, who had rendered themselves so deservedly obnoxious, would be treated with much lenity, if they still attempted to retain their temporalities at the expense of the people they had endeavoured to enslave. But the measure appears to have been carried into execution with an ingenuity of cruelty, which painfully marks the intensity of the national hatred, and the occasional ferocity of the chief. "From this time forth," says Knighton, "they seized every ecclesiastic whom they could find, and after expelling them from their houses, made a public mock of their misery, reserving their tortures to fill up their intervals of sport and enjoyment. It was not uncommon for them at these times to drive before them troops of aged English priests and nuns, whose hands were bound behind their backs, to prevent the possibility of escape; and whilst the brutal soldiery and their hard-hearted leaders sat on the bridges which crossed their rapid rivers, the unhappy wretches were either cast down headlong, or compelled to precipitate themselves into the stream, whilst their drowning agonies were the subject of savage amusement and derision. Amongst these victims, two canons of St. Andrews, who were dragged trembling before the robber Wallace, as he stood upon the bridge of St. Johnston's, made a wonderful escape from the very jaws of death; for as he was on the point of pronouncing their sentence, he was suddenly arrested by the arrival of messengers from the Scottish nobles and breaking off, he commanded them to be kept in custody. Their friends afterwards interceded for them, so that on payment of a high ransom, they were permitted instantly to leave the kingdom, under a solemn oath never to pass the Borders. One of these men," adds

the historian, "remained for some time at Gysborne, and with his own lips described to me the danger from which he had escaped." Others were not so fortunate; we learn from the same writer, that when Wallace and his soldiers had stormed St. Andrews, three Englishmen who had settled there, probably for the purpose of trade, amid the sack and slaughter which ensued, fled to the Needle of St. Andrew, a sharp-pointed rock or column, which conferred the privilege of sanctuary on any one who touched it. The fury of the soldiery, however, could not be restrained by the holiness of the spot, and the defenceless victims were immolated on the rock of refuge.

The truth seems to be, that the character and actions of this extraordinary man were, in all respects, colossal. His crimes as well as his virtues evolved themselves on a great scale; he himself, and his country, had been crushed under the intolerable weight of an unjust system of government, till, from a desire not only to avenge the blood of friends and countrymen, but to strike terror into the hearts of the oppressors, and to impress upon them the conviction that nothing short of their utter extermination was intended, retaliation in its most cruel shape was sometimes not only permitted, but encouraged, by this formidable leader. To expect in a mind like his, bred up in a dark and iron age, and perpetually exposed to the most hardening influence of the saddest sights of war, the refined benevolence, and the gentler virtues of peace, would be unreasonable and absurd; and it is quite evident, notwithstanding the unmingled eulogies of Blind Harry, and the enthusiastic sophistry of later writers, that Wallace, in the great struggle to which he had devoted himself, despised and trampled upon the artificial refinements of chivalry. He saw many of the higher nobles and barons of his own land, whilst they affected to be the models of brave and accomplished knights, leaguings themselves, without shame or compunction, under the banner of England against the independence of their country, and leaving the defence of the national liberty to the lower classes of their vassals or tenantry, whom they deemed utterly unworthy of any high or knightly distinctions. It was exclusively through the assistance of these despised orders that Wallace had been able to keep up his almost hopeless struggle; from those knightly models of every thing that was brave and

generous, he had as yet received little assistance, and frequent opposition—and in the cautious and selfish characters of some who had joined him, his discernment had detected the incipient timidity, which, under any reverse of fortune or disappointment of preferment, would be sure to prompt absolute desertion. It was impossible for him not to despise alike such men, and the system of observance, under which they had been educated. His soul was devoted to a far simpler worship, that of *Liberty*. at the horns of her altar he was eager, not only to slay every invader of his country, but, with a rude and savage pleasantry, which seems to have formed a peculiar feature in his character, to trample upon all refined generosity, and high wrought sensibility and humanity, which, no doubt, appeared to him utterly misplaced and absurd with regard to the mortal enemies of Scotland. It is in this point, we are to remark the decided difference between the characters of Wallace and Bruce, both engaged in the same glorious cause, although at different periods: the latter throughout his whole career never losing or outraging for a moment the feelings of a chivalrous and accomplished knight: Wallace, on the contrary, approaching far nearer to the model of an old Roman in the stern days of the republic, who knew only two great motives of action—the love of his country and the hatred of her enemies.

In pursuance of his object, Wallace determined to dislodge the warlike Bishop of Durham from the ecclesiastical palace of Glasgow, which belonged by right to his friend and ally, Bishop Wishart. A rapid march soon brought him in sight of the city, and having divided his little force of three hundred cavalry into two bodies, one of which he took the command himself, and committed the other to an experienced leader. With that rude pleasantry which he often indulged in before battle, he asked the leader of the first division, “Whether do you choose to bear up the bishop’s tail, or go forward and take his blessing?” His friend at once understood the intended plan of attack, and proposed assailing the rear of the English, resigning the more honourable post to his commander, “who,” as he jocularly observed, “had not yet been confirmed.”

As the Scots drew near the spot against which their operations were directed, Wallace enjoined upon his

companions the necessity of being cautious; "for," said he, "the men of Northumberland are all good warriors." The two divisions separated, that under the command of his friend taking a compass round the town, so as to "bear up the tail," or attack the rear of the bishop, while that under the command of Wallace advanced up the High street to the castle. Their approach, however, had been discovered; for, when near the present site of the college church, the Scots came in contact with the English, and the inhabitants had scarcely time to shelter themselves in their dwellings before a terrific conflict commenced. The politic, potent, and warlike prelate, with whom our patriots had to contend, possessed a feudal following of knights and esquires, inferior only to that of Edward himself. The narrow street, however, in which they were engaged, was in favour of the Scots; and the sword of Wallace wrought dreadful execution on the helmets and head-pieces of the enemy. The manner in which he swept his enemies from before him, was long remembered by the inhabitants of Glasgow. Though the enemy fought with the most determined valour, the gallantry of the Scots sustained them against the efforts of numerous opponents; and in the heat of the engagement, Wallace having unhorsed Henry of Hornecester, a stout monk, fonder of the casque than the cowl, who carried the banner of the bishop, the ardour of some of the superstitious followers of the prelate was somewhat damped by the circumstance, they fell back before a vigorous charge of the Scots. At this juncture the other division of Wallace's little army having reached the elevated ground in the rear of the English, and seeing the battle raging below, hastily arranged themselves for the charge, and before the enemy were apprised of this new danger, the torrent of spears came rushing down upon them with overwhelming impetuosity. Their dismay was now complete. A hasty and disordered retreat ensued, and the by-ways leading from the High street were so choked up by the fugitives, that a number of them were trampled to death by their companions. Anthony Beck, however, made his escape, with about three hundred of his cavalry, and now perfectly convinced that in Scotland there could be no security for him while the daring outlaw was at liberty, he directed his flight towards England, where he represented the horrors and

cruelties in the most exaggerated light; the consequence of which was another proclamation offering an additional reward for the capture of Wallace, dead or alive.

CHAPTER VII.

Wallace surprises Ormesby, the English Justiciary. Is joined by a number of Barons. Expedition to the West Highlands. Battle of Brandir, and death of MacFadyan.

AFTER the defeat of Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham, and his retreat into England, Wallace united his forces with those under Douglas, and made a rapid march for the purpose of surprising the English justiciar, who, as our hero was informed, in his progress through Scotland, had arrived in Perth, and was about to hold his court at Scone. Such was the silence and celerity of their march, that the English troops were dispersed and cut to pieces, the officers of the court, who kept the doors, were slain in their civil robes, and the travelling equipage, and furniture, the carriages, horses, and money chest of his high dignitary, the second in the kingdom, seized and secured, when Ormesby scarcely knew that he was attacked, and before he could organize the slightest resistance. It was indeed with the greatest difficulty, that he himself could make his escape; accompanied by a few attendants, leaving every thing which he possessed in the hands of the enemy; and impressed with terror at the late dreadful acts of retaliation, following the example of the Bishop of Durham, fled with precipitation to England.

At the time of this spirited enterprise, Warrene, Earl of Surrey, the guardian, and Cressingham, the treasurer, were both out of the kingdom, so that by the flight of Beck, and Ormesby, the English government was greatly weakened; and many of the Scottish barons, encouraged by his repeated successes, renounced their extorted allegiance, and joined the party of Wallace. Of these the most illustrious was the High Steward of Scotland, a baron of great power, who possessed extensive estates in

no fewer than six counties in Scotland. Along with him came his brother, Sir John Stewart, of Bonkyl, and these brought with them not only their numerous retainers and armed vassals, but many of the lesser chiefs, who were dependant upon the family, and were accustomed to fight under their banner. Among others about the same time who joined the patriotic banner of our hero, we find the names of Sir Alexander de Lindsay, Sir John Stewart, of Rusky, and Sir Richard Lundin, at the head of their vassals; also Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, a prelate of great political talent; although in his subsequent career, of rather versatile allegiance.

The plan of operations which our hero now adopted, was calculated to make the most of the accession of these new adherents, and at the same time it risked as little as possible the occurrence of any great defeat which might have the effect of destroying the reviving hopes of his party. Wallace showed as much sagacity for the cabinet, as the field of battle. In the district where his property lay, each baron could command a small force of his own tenantry, and with this it was his duty to harass and attack the English, in their foraging parties, to intercept the convoys on the road to the different garrisons, and to watch the moment, when any favourable opportunity occurred, of making themselves masters of the fortresses which they held, or of cutting off the detachments sent from England to relieve them. With these different leaders who, though they submitted to his directions, acted in independent bodies, and in various parts of the country, at a distance from each other, our hero, by means of the lower classes who were all, heart and hand, his firm supporters, maintained a constant and rapid communication; and on any great emergency, or when an opportunity of attack presented itself, wherein the presence of a larger force than he himself commanded, was necessary to ensure his success, it was not long before he received the reinforcements which he required. When his object was gained, they again dispersed, and on reaching their own districts, recommenced their more desultory operations against the enemy. Such a mode of warfare had many advantages, and would in a short time undoubtedly have crowned the patriotic exertions of the patriotic Wallace, had not dissension and treachery crept into his councils. It established various points of resistance, and open re-

bellion throughout the country, which completely distracted the English government, divided their attention, weakened their disposable force, and gave to the Scots some leader in almost every county, under whom the brave and adventurous spirits, who were willing to join their standard, might at once enlist themselves; it prevented Wallace from exercising his supreme command in too rigorous and constant a manner over barons, whose feudal pride, he well knew, was easily hurt, and who regarded him as inferior in rank to themselves; and it relieved the country, from a maintenance of a large army, which could not possibly have been kept long together, without experiencing great distress, and calling for sacrifices upon the part of the lower classes, which by the pressure of individual want, might have produced an indisposition to assist in the contest, for their freedom from foreign bondage. These arrangements were formed with such political foresight as certainly entitled him to success.

It is at this period that Blind Harry, the Minstrel, in his poetical biography of Wallace, introduces an expedition into the mountainous regions around Loch Awe, the object of which was to assist Sir Neil Campbell, of Lochow, the ancestor of the present family of Argyle, and to attack and expel an Irish chief, of the name of MacFadyan, who had been sent into this wild district, at the head of a large body of his countrymen, and had engaged in a vain attempt to reduce it under the dominion of England. It is certain that in his expedition into Scotland, in 1296, Edward was joined at Stirling by the Earl of Ulster, at the head of an army of thirty thousand Irish infantry, and four hundred armed horse; and it is by no means improbable, that in his subsequent march into the northern counties, the King of England should have adopted the policy of leaving a large body of these savage soldiers under the command of some of their native chiefs, as the most suitable parties for executing his despotic will upon the inhabitants of such parts of these districts as evinced an indisposition to his government. But that interesting and extensive portion of Scotland, comprising the West Highlands and Islands, had never been profaned by the foot of a usurper. This may have been partly averted by most of the chieftains coming forward and taking the oath of allegiance, and partly by the extreme difficulty of leading a numerous army

through a country so intersected by arms of the sea, and rendered almost inaccessible by its rocky and mountainous barriers. In order to have some kind of control over a people so isolated, yet so powerful as to render them extremely dangerous, the policy of Edward at first suggested the idea of carrying along with him the chieftains whose influence was considered the most extensive.—This measure, however, he soon perceived, was not so effectual as he anticipated; and he determined on sending a colony of Irish to fix themselves in some central part of the country he wished to overawe. With this view, he compelled one of the chieftains, whom he had carried with him to London, to exchange his Highland estate for an equivalent of lands in England.

Having effected this, he gave a grant, of no very certain limits, to a creature of his own, named MacFadyan, who, with a tumultuous horde of Anglo-Irish and renegade Scots, amounting to about fifteen thousand, landed in Lorn, and instantly proceeded to ravage the country with fire and sword—committing the most revolting atrocities on such of the inhabitants as refused to join them. Much obscurity hangs over the birth, connexions, and character of the leader of this band of locusts. According to Blind Harry, his origin was low, although high in favour at the English court. He seems to have held some situation of importance in Ireland, as the Minstrel, referring to those Irish refugees who took shelter in Ireland under Wallace, says—

“ Sum part off tham was in to Irland borne,
That MacFadyane had exile furth beforne;
King Eduuardis man he was sworn of Ingland,
Off richt law byrth, supposs he tuk on hand.”

Having talents and ambition, he allied himself to the enemies of his country, and, like other mushrooms, thrived amid the rankness of that corruption with which he had surrounded himself. A wretch that had risen by oppressing and assisting to bind the necks of his own freeborn countrymen to the yoke of slavery, was a very fit instrument to employ in forwarding the views of England in the subjugation of Scotland.

He had not proceeded far, however, in his desolating progress, before the fiery cross was seen hurrying on, by

hill and glen, to gather the children of Gaël to repel their barbarous assailants. Duncan, of Lorn, the uncle, or, according to some authors, the younger brother of the chief, unable to withstand the superior force of the enemy, had retreated towards Loch Awe, to obtain the protection of Sir Neil Campbell. This brave man, along with his brother, Black Duncan of the Castles, had collected a body of three hundred well-armed clansmen. With this party he continued to harass the enemy, by attacking their foraging parties and cutting off their supplies. This determined MacFadyan to follow him through the fastnesses of the country, and endeavour to overwhelm him by his superior numbers. Sir Neil was acquainted with the country, and he managed his retreat with great dexterity. After leading his unwary adversary round by the head of Brandir Pass, he hurried down that dangerous and difficult defile, and crossing the narrow and ill-constructed fabric which served for a bridge, he broke it down; and thus being secure from immediate pursuit, found himself in one of the strongest positions imaginable. His front was commanded by a castle which commanded the only approach by which he could be assailed; while his rear was protected by the Awe, a deep and rapid river, running out of the Loch of the same name. The almost perpendicular barrier of rocks which lined the side of the Awe—down which, as has already been mentioned, Sir Neil and his party had to make their way, before they could place the river between them and their pursuers—was of such a nature that a man could not get on without the assistance of his hands, to prevent him from slipping into the deep and eddy abyss below; and, even with this assistance at the present day, it is a passage of considerable danger, from the enormous masses of loose stones with which the sloping face of the rocks is covered, from the brink of the water to their summits, which are of great elevation. The least accidental derangement of the stones at the bottom never fails to put those above in motion, when an immense rush takes place, attended often with serious consequences to the parties underneath. The reader may, therefore, conceive the facility with which, thus circumstanced, Sir Neil and his followers could, from the opposite side of the river, retard the advance of even a larger army than that of MacFadyan. The difficulty of the

pass is not perceptible till the angle of the rock is fairly turned, consequently the Irish army had no opportunity of covering their advance by discharging their missiles. They were obliged to follow each other singly; thus affording, as they came creeping along, fair marks for the arrows of the Scots, part of whom plied their deadly shafts, while others were engaged in throwing stones from the slings against the face of the rocks, and thus bringing down masses of the loose fragments upon the heads of their already embarrassed pursuers.

The castle to which Sir Neil retired, though small, possessed great natural advantages. Situated on a rocky knoll at the edge of a deep ravine, it could only be approached from the road through which MacFadyan had to advance, and that by means of a ladder which the party within always kept on their own side. When they wished to admit any one, a rope was thrown over that he might pull the rope towards him; he then descended to the bottom of the ravine, when, placing the ladder against the opposite rock, in this manner he ascended and reached the castle.

When Sir Neil Campbell had determined on this line of retreat, he dispatched Duncan of Lorn, and an old, but swift-footed Highlander, named Michael, to acquaint Wallace of his perilous situation, and to crave his aid in driving the invaders from the country. Wallace, aware of the importance of preventing the establishment intended by Edward, lost no time in complying with the request of his old confederate; and, Sir Richard Lundin having joined him with five hundred men, he now found himself enabled to march to the relief of the West Highlanders, at the head of two thousand soldiers.

In Duncan Lorn and his servant, Wallace had sure and intelligent guides. At that time nothing but intricate footpaths, known only to the natives, existed in the Highlands; and as they were often formed by deer-stalkers, while tracing their game, they frequently led through places both perilous and perplexing to the stranger.

By the time the Scottish army had reached the chapel of St. Fillan, part of the foot soldiers began to fag, and get disordered in their ranks. Wallace therefore stopped them, and thus addressed them. "Good men," said he, "this will never do. If we come up with the enemy in

such broken array, we may receive serious injury ourselves, but can do them very little hurt in return. It is also necessary, that we should be up with them as soon as possible; for if they hear of our approach, they may choose a plain field, where their numbers will give them advantage. To prevent this, I will go forward with those who are able, and leave the rest to follow at more leisure." Accordingly taking with himself two hundred of the tried veterans, of Ayshire, and placing another hundred under the command of Sir John Graham, with Sir Richard Lundin at the head of his own followers, they crossed a mountain in their front, and descended into Glendochar. Here they met a scout whom they had previously sent forward, acting as guide to Sir Neil Campbell, and his three hundred Highlanders. This wary leader, on hearing of the advance of Wallace, thought it proper to retire towards him, and have the passage free to MacFadyan, who, he knew, if he followed, could make choice of very few positions where his numbers would be of any advantage. Having given our hero a detail of what information he possessed, respecting the state of the invaders, Michael was again sent forward to watch the motions of the enemy; and the tough old mountaineer, having fallen in with a scout from MacFadyan, who had been sent to track the route of Sir Neil, managed to dispatch him with his dirk, and returned with the tidings to his chief.

The ground having now become impassable for cavalry, the Scots dismounted and proceeded on foot. Their march had not been perceived by the enemy, and from the superior knowledge they had of the country, they managed to surprise the Irish in a situation where flight was almost impracticable, and the superiority of their numbers became rather a disadvantage. The conflict continued for two hours, with unexampled fury on both sides. Multitudes of the Irish were forced over the rocks, into the gulf below. Many threw themselves into the water to escape the swords of the Scots; while various bands of Highlanders, stationed among the rocks, sent down showers of stones, and arrows, where the enemy appeared most obstinate in the strife. Wallace, armed with a steel mace, at the head of his veterans, now made a charge which decided the fate of the day. Those Scots who had joined the Irish, threw away their arms, and on their

knees, implored for mercy. MacFadyan, with fifteen of his men having made their way over the rocks, and attempted to conceal themselves in a cave, Duncan of Lorn, requested permission of Wallace, to follow and punish the chief, for the atrocities he had committed; and it was not long before he returned, bringing his head on a spear, which Sir Neil Campbell caused to be fixed on the top of the rock, in which he had taken shelter, which is still known in the country, by the name of the Pinnacle of MacFadyan.*

Having effected the object of his expedition, Wallace convened a meeting of the chiefs, of the West Highlands, in the priory of Ardchattan, (the ruins of which are still to be seen on the banks of Loch Etive), where he informed them of the proceedings of the southern barons, their various successes against the invaders—and their hopes of ultimately, and at no distant day, driving them out of the country; and having concerted measures for the defence of the district which he had just delivered, he returned to his duties in the low country, having received an accession to his numbers, which covered any loss he had sustained in the battle of Brandir. The spoil which the Scots collected after the battle, is said to have been very considerable; any share in which our hero, as was his custom, refused. On his return he resumed his operations against the English, with a success which every day brought new partisans to his standard, and inspired his soldiers with the utmost confidence of victory. Edward now became truly alarmed at the numbers who were flocking to Wallace; he made several changes in the government of Scotland, and wrote in the most urgent terms to Cressingham, his treasurer, commanding him, if it was necessary, to drain his exchequer to the last farthing in the suppression of the Scottish rebellion. Aware, also, of the impolicy of detaining the Scottish nobles, whom he had compelled to remain in England, since the battle of Dunbar, whilst he received certain information, that the great body of their vassals, had joined themselves to Wallace, he adopted the expedient, of allowing some of the most powerful amongst them to return to Scotland,

* For the foregoing account of the battle of Brandir, we are indebted to Mr. Carrick, who studied the topography of that district, to illustrate the biography of the Minstrel.

under a solemn engagement, that they would use their utmost influence to recall their vassals, to their allegiance. In the midst of this show of confidence, however, the king thought proper to detain their eldest sons, as hostages for their fidelity. Others he took with him to Flanders, where his own presence was at this moment imperiously required; and having ordered as many of his barons as he could spare from his war on the continent, to proceed, with their feudal services, into Scotland, he passed over the channel, and awaited the result of the struggle with feelings of considerable anxiety. Nor were these causeless alarms.

CHAPTER VIII.

Robert Bruce joins Wallace. Percy and Clifford sent to quell the Rebellion. Night-Skirmish. Disaffection of the Scottish Nobles. They desert Wallace, who retires to the North. Battle of Stirling.

THE success of the insurrection excited by Wallace has been attributed by some English authors—and by Langtoft in particular—to the disgraceful parsimony of Cressingham, the treasurer, who had disgusted the English soldiery by withholding their pay, at a time when their services might have been peculiarly advantageous. In consequence of this dishonesty on the part of Cressingham, many of the yeomen and pages, finding more danger than profit to be met with in the Scottish wars, deserted their posts, and returned to their own country, where they would have peace if they had no pay. Although the dishonest and avaricious character of the English treasurer is a matter on which the authors of both countries are agreed, the precipitation with which the garrisons of the usurper now retreated on the approach of the Scots, shows that the severe examples which had already been made were not without their effect.

While Wallace was thus following up his plan for the freedom of Scotland, he received an important accession to his standard, in the person of Robert Bruce, the younger. The conduct of young Bruce (afterwards the

heroic Robert I.) was at this period vacillating and inconsistent in the extreme. His large possessions in Carrick and Annandale made him master of an immense tract of country extending from the Frith of Clyde to the Solway; and the number of able-bodied men, which his summons could call into the field, would have formed a valuable acquisition to the patriots. His power caused him to be narrowly watched by England; and as his inconstant character became suspected by government, he was summoned by the wardens of the western marches to meet them at Carlisle, to treat on the affairs of his master, Edward, King of England. Bruce, however unwilling to attend this summons, dared not to disobey, and resorted to the place appointed, with a numerous attendance of his friends and vassals. On appearing before the wardens, a few questions were put, to which he returned evasive replies, and was ordered to make oath on the consecrated host, and the sword of Thomas a-Becket, that he would continue faithful to his liege lord, Edward, and assist him with his whole power in quelling the insurrection in Scotland. To give a proof of his fidelity, and wish to serve England, on his return home, he ravaged the estates of Sir William Douglas, (who was at that time along with Wallace,) seized his wife and children, and carried them along with him into Annandale. Having thus put the suspicion of the English wardens to rest, he privately assembled his father's retainers; talked lightly of his extorted oath, from which he would be easily absolved by the Pope; and painting to them in vivid colours the persecution their countrymen were suffering from the English, urged them to follow him, and join the brave men who had taken arms against the common enemy. They heard him to an end, but, without assigning any reason, they refused to accompany him; probably, because their master, the elder Bruce, was then with Edward. Young Robert, (then in his twenty-third year,) however, nothing moved by the refusal, collected his own tenants, proceeded to join Wallace, and openly took arms against the English.

The news of this rebellion was now carried to Edward. This monarch had hitherto regarded the insurrection in Scotland more as the unconnected operations of banditti, than anything like an organised scheme for shaking off his usurped authority. He at first disregarded it; and

as many of the most powerful of the Scottish nobles were then either prisoners in England, or in attendance upon himself, he was easily persuaded that it would be instantly put down by the governor, with the troops under his command. In this opinion he was supported both by the English and Scottish barons whom he thought proper to consult. The latter, either ignorant, or pretending to be so, of the talents and resources of Wallace, assured the king that their presence was absolutely necessary, before any formidable force could be brought into the field; how Edward could be so duped by such representations, we will not pretend to say; but he must certainly have thought otherwise, when he, not long before, sent home several of the most powerful of the Scottish barons, for the express purpose of reclaiming their vassals from the service of Wallace. Langtoft openly charges the English barons with deceiving their master in the affair, and concealing from him the real state of the country.—We are not altogether surprised at this, because, it is well known, that about this period Edward and his nobles were not on the most friendly terms. Having entirely subjugated Wales, and now, as he fondly thought, insured the subjection and services of Scotland, and remembering the facility with which, by the aid of a body of Scots lent him by Alexander III., he overawed and suppressed the discontent shown by the nobility on a former occasion, he began to assume towards the English an imperious and haughty demeanour, which both alarmed their fears and excited their jealousy. The unprincipled stretches of power which he had attempted since his triumphal return to London, after his victories in Scotland, had also sown the seeds of dissatisfaction among the lower classes, who, no longer dazzled with the splendour of his achievements over the liberties of their Scottish neighbours, began to reflect on the encroachments which their ambitious, and, as they now considered him, unprincipled sovereign, was making on their own.

Edward, however, to satisfy himself, as to the real state of affairs in Scotland, despatched Anthony Beck, the martial Bishop of Durham, for the purpose of gaining information; and Edward, finding from his account, that the revolt was of a serious nature, he paused in the midst of his preparations for an expedition to Flanders; and despatched orders to the Earl of Surrey, to call forth

the military force on the north of the Trent, and without delay, to reduce and punish the insurgents. This, however, was no easy matter. Surrey was, perhaps, the most efficient of all Edward's generals, but at the time of receiving Edward's orders, he was residing in Northumberland, for the recovery of his health. Having associated with him in the command, his nephew, Lord Henry Percy, who had been superseded in his office of governor of Ayr, and Robert de Clifford, he sent them forward with forty thousand foot, and three hundred cavalry, a force which he deemed sufficient to restore the country to the allegiance of his master.

It was soon discovered that the same success which attended Wallace, did not wait upon the more effeminate councils of the allied Scottish barons, amongst whom the near approach of Percy called into full action, that fatal spirit of jealousy and disunion which prevented our hero from reaping the reward of his unparalleled labour. Even in the very imperfect and hurried details of these transactions, as they appear in the English historians, it is not difficult to detect, at this time, the operations of two parties in the Scottish army—the one bold, resolute, and active, the other weak and timid in the extreme—the first led by Wallace, and composed of his own hardy soldiers inured to war, and obstinate in their resistance—the other, including the feudal retainers of the barons, whose united force, although inferior in cavalry, far outnumbered in infantry, the army of Percy.

While the troops under Percy and Clifford, were on their march through Annandale, they encamped for the night, in a small village near Lochmaben castle. Their quarters were suddenly attacked by the Scots, with great fury. The darkness prevented the English from at first discovering the number of their assailants; much confusion ensued—the soldiers, unable to find their leaders, rushed blindly against each other, and either fell by their own weapons, or became an easy prey to the assailants. In this extremity, however, they set fire to the wooden sheds, in which they had passed the night; and as the flames blazed wide and bright over the fields, they collected themselves, by the light, under their respective banners, and easily repulsed the enemy, which it is probable, consisted solely of the soldiers under Wallace's immediate command. In the morning, Percy

advanced to Ayr, where he was informed, that the great body of the Scots were encamped at about two miles distance; he lost no time, therefore, in proceeding towards them, in order of battle. On reaching the neighbourhood of Irvine, the English commander found Wallace and the insurgent barons encamped on a well chosen position, and able from their numbers to have given battle, had they not been woefully enfeebled by dissention. All was in confusion, and at variance. Some were jealous of Robert Bruce, who, it was reported, had a design upon the crown; others favoured the Comyns, the heads of which powerful family, Sir John Comyn, of Badenoch, and the Earl of Buchan, had been liberated by Edward, from their attendance upon his person, and sent into Scotland to use their efforts in reconciling their countrymen to the English government; a third party, agreed with Wallace in adhering to John Baliol as their lawful sovereign; but the feudal pride of many of this party refused to act under his orders, upon the ground that he was of inferior rank to themselves, and more fit to be their vassal, than their commander. In such circumstances, it was evident that their indecision would result in a total defeat. Sir Richard Lundin, a Scottish baron, who had hitherto, resolutely refused to acknowledge the claims of Edward, at the head of his vassals, openly rode over to the enemy, declaring that he thought it folly any longer to remain with a faction, fatally and hopelessly divided against itself. Immediately afterwards, the Bishop of Glasgow and Sir William Douglas, submitted themselves to Percy, under the stipulation, that their lives should be spared, and their estates preserved; and Percy with his principal officers agreed to a solemn meeting with the rest of the Scottish barons, at which the terms of their capitulation should be drawn up in writing, and the hostages which each would deliver for his future fidelity to the King of England, should be arranged and nominated.

To these negotiations Wallace indignantly refused to become a party, and would neither concede to the enemy, nor accept for himself any cessation of hostilities. Collecting his own followers, and joined by one solitary baron, Sir Andrew Moray, of Bothwell, who, amid the universal defection, continued faithful to his persecuted

country, he intently watched over the proceedings ; and when Percy and the Scottish chiefs were engaged in arranging a pacification, he broke in with the utmost fury upon their encampment, and put five hundred men to the sword, carrying off a great booty, and, if we may believe the English historians, behaving with a ferocity which spared neither age, nor sex, nor infancy. The enemy, however, inflicted a terrible retaliation ; for coming suddenly upon the Scottish force, they repulsed them, after a severe struggle, regained the plunder, and slew near a thousand men. Bruce, Earl of Carrick, Sir William Douglas, Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, the High Steward, and Sir Alexander de Lindesay, now made their final submission, acknowledging, in a written instrument, drawn up at the time, their unnatural rebellion against their liege lord, Edward of England, and deploring the robberies, slaughters, and fire-raising, which they had committed in the kingdom of Scotland, and the territory of Galloway. They were then formally admitted to the peace of the king—in other words pardoned and received into favour—and a copy of their letter of agreement drawn up in Norman French, the language then generally used in the negotiations between the two kingdoms, was transmitted to Wallace ; but this brave man treated all proposals of submission with disdain, and instantly sent it back with an expression of haughty contempt. He then collected his own tried and veteran followers ; and putting himself at the head of these, accompanied by Sir Andrew Bothwell, he retired indignantly to the north.

The conduct of the Scottish nobility, who had capitulated to Percy, was irresolute and contradictory. Though they had apparently separated themselves from Wallace and his party, their real intentions were hostile to the English government. It was their first object to save their estates from immediate forfeiture ; but having effected this, they delayed, from time to time, on some frivolous pretext, the delivery of their hostages, and anxiously awaited the further progress of Wallace, holding themselves in readiness, on any decided success, to rejoin the insurgents. Sir William Douglas and the Bishop of Glasgow, however, considered that they were bound by the capitulation ; and finding themselves unable to perform their articles of agreement, they voluntarily sur-

rendered to the English. It was the fate of this last mentioned prelate to be trusted by neither party, and was shut up in the castle of Roxburgh.

At the head of his personal adherents, and a large body of the free yeomanry of Scotland, Wallace proceeded northwards. This latter class of men consisted of tenants and descendants of tenants of the crown and churchlands, or those who occupied farms on the demesnes of the barons, for which they paid an equivalent rent in money or produce. They enjoyed the privilege of removing to whatever place they might think most desirable, and owed no military service except to the king, for the defence of the country. Among them, the independence of Scotland always found its most faithful and stubborn supporters. They formed a striking contrast to the cottars, who were entirely subject, both in body and means, to the will of the landholder, and were sold or transferred with the estate; and could be claimed and brought back to it, if they removed, without permission, in the same manner as strayed cattle. These formed the bulk of the degraded horde who followed the banners of the recreant barons, and whose servility, ignorance, and ferocity, often made them dangerous to the liberties of the country; while the former class, along with the freemen of the burghs, supplied the materials from which Wallace recruited the ranks of his patriotic battalions.

Aware, from former experience, of the difficulty of bringing Wallace to an engagement if he were not so inclined, Percy and Clifford appear to have withdrawn their forces, satisfied with having detached the aristocracy from his standard—none remaining with our hero, save the gallant Moray, Sir John Graham, and a few of his personal friends.

But the system which Wallace had organized for the emancipation of his country was not liable to any material derangement, in consequence of the defection of a few timid and interested barons. It is true, the desertion of such men as Sir William Douglas must have occasioned him considerable regret, being thereby prevented from meeting the enemy openly in the field, with such an equality of force as would have insured success. Still his standard was supported by the addition of new recruits—and the confidence the great body of the people reposed in him is certain; for Knighton, an old English

historian, informs us, "that the whole followers of the nobility had attached themselves to him; and that although the persons of their lords were with the King of England, their heart was with Wallace, who found his army reinforced by so immense a multitude of the Scots, that the community of the land obeyed him as their leader and their prince." The spirit of resistance became soon very general throughout the northern counties. In Aberdeenshire especially the revolt was serious: and Edward directed his writs to the bishop and sheriff of the county, commanding them to punish the rebels for the murders and robberies which they had been committing; and to be on their guard against an intended attack upon the strong castle of Urquhart, an extensive fortress on the banks of Loch Ness; and they were likewise ordered to furnish William de Warenne, the governor, with whatever supplies might be wanted for its defence.

Edward, in the meantime, dissatisfied with the dilatory conduct of Surrey, in not sooner putting down the rebels, and suppressing the revolt, which the king's energetic and confident spirit caused him to treat too lightly, superseded him, and appointed Brian Fitz-Alan governor of Scotland; and having commanded as many of the English barons as he could spare from his foreign war, to repair to Scotland, with all the horse and foot which they could muster, and to co-operate with Fitz-Alan and Surrey, he passed over to Flanders, taking along with him several of the Scottish nobility.

The success which had attended Wallace, since the affair of Irvine, and the formidable character of the well-disciplined force which now adhered to his banner, occasioned a wavering among a number of barons who had so shamefully submitted to the usurper. Their situation it must be allowed had become one of great difficulty. The character of Wallace was stern and decisive. The punishment he inflicted upon traitors to their country, they had reason to know was seldom mitigated by any consideration for the high rank of the parties; and the English had repeatedly shown their inability to protect them from the vengeance of their indignant countrymen. It was therefore with no slight alarm, that they heard that Wallace's first step, after leaving them at Irvine, was to attack the castle of Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, with great fury, to carry off his household wealth, along with

his horses, his arms, his nephews, and all that he could meet with. The selection which Wallace had made of Wishart as an example to the others, had no doubt been suggested partly by the ingratitude of that churchman, in deserting the cause, after having been, by means of the patriots, so lately restored to his diocese; and partly from his being instrumental in the disgraceful negotiation with the enemy. The sacredness attached to his character as a priest, would speedily disappear before the heinous offence of assisting to detach, in the hour of need, the swords of a Douglas, a Lundin, and a Bruce, from the service of their country.

It was fortunate for the Scots that Warrenne, Earl of Surrey, evinced great remissness, in insisting on the fulfilment of the treaty of Irvine. He was on bad terms with Cressingham the treasurer, a proud and violent churchman, who preferred the cuirass to the cassock; and it is probable that his being superseded in his government of Scotland, and yet commanded to remain with the army, was an indignity which so high a baron could ill brook. The consequences of this inactivity were soon apparent. The Scottish barons were now more inclined for a new arrangement, than willing to fulfil the terms of the former. They wished in particular to introduce some stipulations respecting the liberty of Scotland, a proposal, made no doubt for the purpose of allaying in some degree the indignation of their patriotic countrymen. The increasing power, and continued obstinacy of Wallace, was made a pretext for their non-compliance; and they could now with apparent justice, decline the final ratification of a deed of treason against the independence of their country, when protection from the consequences was so extremely uncertain.

Meanwhile fortune seemed to wait upon the arms of Wallace in every direction. The English garrisons of Forfar, Brechin, Montrose, and many other important stations to the north of the Forth were successively reduced; and the Scottish army had commenced the siege of Dundee, when intelligence arrived that the Earl of Surrey and Hugh Cressingham the treasurer, at the head of an army of fifty thousand foot and a thousand heavy armed horse, were on their march to Stirling. It appears from this, that although Surrey was superseded by Fitz-Alan in his situation as governor, he still retained the

command of the army; but he was now extremely indolent and infirm from the united effects of age and disease, and Cressingham the treasurer, whose extortions had rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the Scots, although a churchman, imitated the example of the warlike Bishop of Durham, and not only accompanied the army, but insisted on directing the operations, and over-ruling the opinions of its officers. Of all these matters our hero appears to have received accurate information; and on ascertaining the advance of the English army to Stirling; his knowledge of the country immediately suggested to him the advantage of gaining the high ground upon the banks of the Forth, near Cambuskenneth, before the enemy had passed the narrow wooden bridge, which at that place was thrown over the river. If he could by a rapid march pre-occupy this ground, he knew that he should either compel them to retreat, or give them battle under circumstances which rendered a victory almost certain. He therefore immediately drew off his army from the siege of the castle of Dundee, having first commanded the townsmen and magistrates to prosecute it during his absence, and threatened them with the extremities of military execution, if, upon his return, he found they had neglected his orders. He then marched towards Stirling, and found, to his satisfaction, that he had anticipated the English, so as to give him time to choose the most favourable position for his army, before the columns of Surrey and Cressingham had reached the opposite side of the river. It was not long, however, before the enemy appeared, and taking up their position on the banks of the river, with the bridge in their front, they found themselves directly opposite to the army of Wallace, which was ready to dispute the passage.

The nature of the ground concealed the Scottish army, which amounted to forty thousand foot, but owing to the desertion of the nobles was exceedingly inferior in horse, of which they had only one hundred and eighty. Wallace's intention was to induce the main body of the English to pass the bridge, and to attack them before they had time to form. Surrey was superior in numbers. He commanded fifty thousand foot soldiers, and one thousand heavy-armed horse. Lord Henry Percy had marched from Carlisle towards Stirling, with a reinforcement of eight thousand foot and three hundred horse; but Cres-

singham the treasurer, dreading the expense of supporting so great a force, had, with an ill-judged economy, given orders for the disbanding of these succours, as he considered the army in the field to be sufficient for the emergency.

But if feuds had rendered the Scots inert and submissive to the enemy at Irvine, the councils of the English were now, in their turn, distracted from the same cause. The mind of the Earl of Surrey appeared more occupied in brooding over his late disgrace, than in attending to the details of the campaign, while Cressingham, the haughty, ambitious, and imperious churchman, assumed additional importance on account of his colleagues having incurred the royal displeasure. Conflicting measures, supported by guerulous and acrimonious language, engendered a dangerous spirit of animosity between them; and this was the real cause, although economy appeared to be the plea, of Cressingham disbanding the reinforcement brought up by Percy, a force which Surrey wished to retain as a reserve.

The Steward of Scotland and the Earl of Lennox, who were at this time with the English army, requested Surrey to delay the attack, while they opened a communication with Wallace, under pretext of bringing him over to the interests of Edward. In consequence of permission being granted, these chiefs ventured to visit the Scottish camp, where they found that the retiring population had, as was the custom, left little behind them that could be useful to the enemy; all their cattle and provisions being now secured in the rear of the protecting columns of their countrymen. This rendered the position of the patriots still more valuable, prepared as they were, in the event of a defeat, to fall back to certain supplies, while their opponents would be still further removed from their resources. The envoys soon returned, and declared they had failed in their hopes of pacification, but that they themselves would join the English force with sixty armed horse. It was now evening, and the Scottish barons, in leaving the army, met a troop of English soldiers returning from forage. Whether from accident or design a skirmish took place, and the Earl of Lennox stabbed an English soldier in the throat. This of course raised a tumult in the camp; a cry arose that they were betrayed by the Scots; and there seems to be

little doubt that Lennox and the Steward were secretly negotiating with Wallace, and only waited a favourable opportunity for joining him. Crying out for vengeance, the English soldiers carried their wounded comrade before their general, and reproached him with having trusted those who had broken their faith, and would betray them to the enemy. "Stay this one night," replied Surrey, "and if to-morrow, they do not keep their promise, you shall have ample revenge." He then commanded his soldiers to be prepared for passing the bridge next day: and thus, with a carelessness little worthy of an experienced commander, who had the fate of a great army dependent on his activity and foresight, he permitted Wallace to tamper with his countrymen in the English service; to become acquainted with the numbers and array of the English force; and to adopt at his leisure his own measures for their discomfiture.

Early next day five thousand foot and a large body of Welsh passed the bridge by sunrise, and soon after re-passed it, on finding that they were not followed by the rest of the army, and that their commander was still asleep in the camp. After about an hour the earl awoke, the army was drawn up, and, as was then usual before any great battle, many new knights were created, some of whom were fated not to survive their first field. It was now the time when the Scottish barons ought to have joined with their sixty horse; and Surrey, having looked for them in vain, commanded the infantry to cross the bridge. This order was scarcely given when it was again recalled, as the Steward of Scotland and the Earl of Lennox were seen approaching, and, it was hoped, brought offers of pacification. But the contrary was the case. They had failed, they said, in all their efforts to prevail on the Scottish army to listen to any proposals, and had not been able to persuade a single soldier to desert. As a last resource, Surrey, who seems to have been aware of the strong position occupied by the Scots, and of the danger of crossing the river, despatched two friars to propose terms to Wallace, who dismissed them with this memorable reply:—"Return to your leaders, and tell them that we came here with no pacific intent, but prepared for battle, determined to give freedom to our country, and inflict vengeance upon her oppressors. Let your masters come and attack us: we are ready to

meet them beard to beard." The rash and presumptuous temper of Cressingham, the treasurer, had already been irritated by the delay of Surrey; and incensed at this cool defiance, he now insisted, along with the division which he commanded, to be permitted instantly to attack the enemy. But the elder and more experienced officers still hesitated; and, at this moment, Sir Richard Lundin, one of the Scottish barons who had joined the English at Irvine, anxiously implored them to delay. "If," said he, "you once attempt to pass the bridge, you are desperately throwing away your lives. The men can only cross two by two. Our enemies command our flank, and will be instantly upon us. I know a ford, not far from hence, where you may pass sixty at a time. Give me but five hundred horse and a small body of foot, I shall turn the enemy's flank, whilst you, lord earl, and the rest of the army, may pass over in safety." This was the sound advice of a veteran soldier who knew the country, and it was fortunate for the Scots it was not followed; but, although it convinced some, it only irritated others, and among these last, Hugh Cressingham, the treasurer. "Why, my lord," cried he to Surrey, who was prudently hesitating, "why do we protract the war, and spend the king's money? Let us pass on, as becomes us, and do our knightly duty!"

Stung with this reproach, Surrey weakly submitted his better judgment to the rashness of this churchman, and commanded the army to defile over the bridge. "It was, indeed," says Hemingford, whose information was derived from those who were present, "a circumstance at which we can never sufficiently wonder, and which produced the most calamitous effects, that so many experienced soldiers should attempt the passage of a narrow bridge, where there was scarce room for two horsemen to ride abreast, in the presence of an enemy ready to attack them. I have heard it stated, by those who were in the battle, that if they had defiled across it without the slightest check, from the rising of the sun till eleven o'clock, the rear division would still have remained on the other side; and that, were you to search the whole kingdom, you could not have selected a spot more favourable for placing the English army within the power of their enemies, or for delivering a large force into the hands of a few." Sir Marmaduke Twenge, a knight of great expe-

rience and courage, along with Cressingham himself, led the van; and, when nearly the half of the army had passed the bridge, perceiving that the Scots kept their strong ground on the heights, Twenge, with chivalrous impetuosity, gave orders for a charge, and made the heavy-armed cavalry spur their horses up the hill. The consequence of this precipitate movement was fatal to the English. A part of the Scottish army had, by this time, made a circuit, and possessed themselves of the foot of the bridge; and Wallace, the moment he saw the communication between the van and the rear of the English force cut off, and all retreat impossible, rushed rapidly down from the high ground and attacking Twenge and Cressingham, before they had time to form, threw them into inextricable disorder. In an instant all was tumult and confusion. Many were slain, multitudes of the heavy-armed horse plunged into the river, and were drowned in making a vain effort to rejoin Surrey, who kept on the opposite side, a spectator of the discomfiture of the flower of his army. In the meantime the standard-bearers of the king and the earl, with another part of the army passed over and shared the same fate, being instantly cut to pieces. A spirited scene now took place. Sir Marmaduke Twenge, on looking round, perceived that the Scots had seized the bridge, and that he and his soldiers were cut off from the rest of the army. A knight advised, in this perilous crisis, that they should throw themselves into the river, and swim their horses to the opposite bank. "What," cried Twenge, who appears to have been no swimmer, "volunteer to drown myself, when I can cut my way through the midst of them, back to the bridge? Never let such foul slander fall on us!" So saying he put spurs to his horse, and driving him into the midst of the enemy, hewed a passage for himself through the thickest of the Scottish columns, and was making his way to the bridge, when he was called to by his nephew, who was wounded, to save him. "Get up and follow me," was the answer. "Alas! I am weak and cannot," returned the other. Sir Marmaduke's servant dismounted, and placed the youth behind his uncle, who rejoined Surrey along with a few knights who had survived the battle.

Meanwhile the Scots committed a dreadful slaughter. Multitudes perished in the river; and as the confusion

and slaughter increased, and the entire defeat of the English became inevitable, the Earl of Lennox and the Steward of Scotland, who, although allies of the King of England, were secretly in treaty with Wallace, threw off the mask, and led a body of their followers to plunder and destroy the flying English. Plunder, however, seemed to be the object of these wary barons, who, having left the brunt of the battle to Wallace and his soldiers, now, when all was gained, came in to appropriate the spoils, and were busily employed in driving the baggage waggons and camp equipage, which had been abandoned by the English, into the heart of the woods, where they might divide the booty at their leisure.

Surrey, who, during the whole attack, remained on the opposite side of the river, on being rejoined by Twenge, committed to him the charge of the castle of Stirling, and the relics of his discomfited army; anxious for his own safety, galloped off at full speed to Berwick, which he reached without drawing bridle; "A wonderful ride," says Hemingford, "for our old earl, and performed with such rapidity and good-will, that the horse which he used, when stabled in the convent of the Friars Minors, would not taste his corn."

From Berwick, Surrey proceeded to join the Prince of Wales in the south, and left the country which had been intrusted to him, exposed to ravage and desolation. Although the English historians restrict the loss of soldiers in this battle to five thousand foot, and a hundred heavy-armed horse, it is probable that nearly one-half of the English army was cut to pieces, and Cressingham, the treasurer, was among the first who fell. Hemingford allows that the plunder which fell into the hands of the victors was very great, and that waggons were filled with the spoils. Smarting under the cruelty and rapacity with which they had been treated by the English—the day of retribution had arrived;—the butcheries of Berwick—the carnage of Dunbar, with a long list of national indignities, and personal sufferings had to be atoned for: the Scots were not slow now to take revenge, nor was Wallace of a temper to restrain them. Few prisoners appear to have fallen into their hands, and the slaughter was general and indiscriminate. So deep was the detestation in which the avaricious character of Cress-

Cressingham was regarded by the Scots, that on Wallace approaching where the body was lying, a party of his soldiers were employed in flaying the body. According to the Chronicle of Lanercost, he is said to have ordered only as much of his skin to be taken off as would make a sword-belt; and his men, perhaps, imitating his example, might have appropriated the rest. "This," says Mr. Tytler, "is no doubt the origin of the ridiculous tale told by Abercromby and some other historians, of the Scots having used it as girths to their horses. If such an order was given by Wallace, which we are inclined to doubt, we have no doubt of him ever wearing such an appendage. The circumstance, however, shows the deep-rooted detestation in which Cressingham was held by the Scots. Nor did his fate excite much sympathy amongst his own countrymen. Hemingford says, "He, who in the day of his pride had oppressed and wounded many with the sword of his tongue, now fell a victim to the sword of the wicked. For the Scots not only slew him, but flayed his dead body, and cut his skin into small fragments, not to be preserved as relics, but employed in the basest uses." The loss on the part of the Scots was extremely trifling; but Wallace had to lament the death of Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, his friend and companion, and the only person of note who had fallen.

The consternation which this victory occasioned among the English was so great, that few or none would venture to wait the approach of the enemy; but abandoning their strongholds, they hurried southward with the greatest precipitation, justly conceiving the terms they were likely to obtain, from one who followed up his victories with so much energy, were hardly worth staying for. To use the words of Knighton, "this awful beginning of hostilities roused the spirit of Scotland, and sunk the hearts of the English." Dundee immediately surrendered to Wallace, and rewarded his army by a rich booty of arms and money. In a short time not a fortress or castle in Scotland remained in the hands of Edward. The castles of Edinburgh and Roxburgh were dismantled; and Berwick, upon the advance of the Scottish army, having been hastily abandoned, Wallace sent Henry de Hali-burton, a Scottish knight, to occupy this important frontier town. In this manner was Scotland once more restored to that liberty of which she had been so un-

justly deprived—thus, by the efforts of a single man, not only unassisted, but actually thwarted and opposed by the nobility of the country; was the iron power of Edward completely broken, and Scotland once more able to lift her head among free nations. The brilliant and decisive victory at Stirling-Bridge was gained on the 11th of September, 1297, exactly twelve months and eleven days from the return of Edward to Berwick, after what he conceived to be the final subjugation of the kingdom.

The state of Scotland, in the early part of 1297, was such as might well have extinguished the ardour of any mind possessed of less energy than that of Sir William Wallace. He saw his country humbled and debased at the feet of a tyrant, whose talents and power forbade every hope of emancipation, while the boldest of her nobles dared not express a wish to be free. His own indignant feelings blazed forth, and, with his kindling enthusiasm, he breathed into his torpid and enslaved countrymen the breath, as it were, of a new existence. The regenerating influence of his heroic example was quickly caught by those whose bosoms still beat responsive to the call of honour; and, in the short space we have mentioned, those banners which had lately waved over hecatombs of butchered Scots, and had been paraded through the land with all the triumphant arrogance of conquest, were now trampled under foot, and the colossal power by which they were upheld, swept away before the righteous indignation of a people determined to be free. It is impossible not to be impressed with admiration at the greatness of that mind, which, with a mere fraction of a disunited and dispirited people, could form the idea of braving a force so overwhelming as that of Edward's, who, in addition to the resources of his own mighty kingdom, had Ireland, Wales, and his continental possessions to depend upon; but when we find those schemes, which he had conceived in the deep recesses of his woodland retreats, not only perseveringly carried against a tide of adverse circumstances—in defiance of the venal nobility of his own country, and the opposition of secret as well as avowed enemies—it may with truth be said, that however much his greatness has been extolled, a tithe of his patriotism has not yet been appreciated. Much has been said, by several writers, of romance

being mixed up with the accounts given of him; but it would be difficult, we conceive, for these same writers to point out any tradition respecting our hero as romantic as many of the undeniable facts that stand recorded of him in the authentic annals of British history.

At a period when considered that he had united, in the sacred cause of liberty, all that was noble, and all that was honourable in the land—to be deserted by the nobility at such a time—it acquired no common courage to bear up against their unseemly and unprincipled defection; and to draw to his banner, after such a desertion, a sufficient number of adherents for his arduous undertaking, required talents of no ordinary description, and exertions which would have deterred any other man. But within two months of the disgraceful negotiation, he not only accomplished this, but also expelled the enemy from a number of strongholds—drove the English from the north, and, with a numerous and well-appointed army, sat himself down in a strong position to await the advance of Edward's legions. In fact, as regards the exploits of Sir William Wallace, we may say that truth exceeds fiction—and his history may well be called romantic.

After so brilliant a victory, achieved in the face of difficulties so formidable, with what feelings must the hero of Stirling, and the degenerate Scottish nobility, have regarded each other! The great power of him whom they basely acknowledged as their liege lord—as the lord paramount of Scotland—was now broken and dispersed before the superior valour and upright steadiness of one whom they considered as below them in birth, and therefore disgracefully abandoned to fight their battles, not only against a foreign usurper, but against their own greatest opposition. In the glorious harvest of laurels, and never-dying fame, they had excluded themselves from all participation; and though conscious that they could not lay claim to the smallest share, they were sensible that the heroism of their late companions would soon be spread through every country in Europe; while they had the mortification to reflect, that the tale of their own cowardly submission would be equally wide spread, as a counterpart to the chivalrous deeds of those friends whom they had so shamefully deserted in the road to immortality.

CHAPTER IX.

Wallace invades England. Dreadful Devastations committed by the Scots.
Wallace is chosen Governor of the kingdom. Discontent of the Scottish nobles.

It was now pretty far advanced in the autumn; and owing to the ravages of war, the interruption of the labours of agriculture, a dreadful dearth and famine, no unfrequent accompaniment of the ravages of war, now fell severely upon the country; and Wallace profiting by the panic, inspired by his victory at Stirling, resolved upon an immediate expedition into England, and supporting his troops within the territory of his enemies. To enable his own people to lay in, against the time of scarcity, the provisions which would otherwise be consumed by his numerous army, and to support his soldiers during the winter months, in an enemy's country, were wise objects. Previous, however, to his marching into England, he commanded that from every county, barony, town and village, a certain proportion of the fighting men, between sixteen and sixty, should be levied. These levies, however, even after so decisive a victory as that of Stirling, were tardily made. The vassals of Scotland, tied up by the rigid fetters of the feudal law, could not join Wallace without the consent of their overlords; and as most of the Scottish nobility had left hostages for their fidelity in the hands of Edward, and many of them possessed great estates in England, which, upon joining Wallace, would have been immediately forfeited, they did not yet take the field against the English. A jealousy, too, of the high military renown, and great popularity of Wallace, prevented all cordial co-operation; and the contempt with which this Liberator of his country must have regarded the nobility, who yet sheltered themselves under the protection of Edward, was not calculated to allay that feeling. On the 25th of September, two weeks after the battle of Stirling, the English government, justly alarmed at the extraordinary success of Wallace, sent letters to the principal nobility of Scotland, returning

them thanks for their fidelity to the king; informing them that they were aware, that the Earl of Surrey was on his way to England, (a delicate way of noticing the flight of Warenne from Stirling,) and directing them to join Brian Fitz-Alan, the governor of Scotland, with all their horse and foot, in order to put down the rebellion of the Scots. It is important to observe the names, to whom these letters were directed, as they contain unexceptionable evidence of the spirit of determined opposition, with which, at this period, the greater part of the Scottish nobles were animated against Wallace. They were John Comyn of Badenoch; Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March; Gilbert of Umfraville, Earl of Angus; Alexander, Earl of Monteith; Malise, Earl of Strathern; James, the Steward of Scotland; John Comyn, Earl of Buchan; Malcolm, Earl of Lennox; and William, Earl of Sutherland; besides four other potent barons, Nicholas de la Haye, Ingelram de Umfraville, Richard Fraser, and Alexander de Lindesay. Six other Scottish nobles, the Earls Caithness, Ross, Mar, Athole, Fife, and Carrick, were overlooked, or purposely omitted; but Fife was a minor, and Carrick, who had joined the insurgents for a short time, soon after renewed his allegiance to Edward. The rest may be presumed to have supported, or, at least to have favoured, the cause of Wallace.

Our hero, at this period, assumed, as his partner in command of the army, Sir Andrew Moray, of Bothwell, the promising son of the brave Sir Andrew, who fell at Stirling. This honour he may have thought due to the patriotic conduct of the father, in adhering to the desperate fortunes of his country, amidst the general defection of the Scottish barons; and, in so far as it might tend to contradict those reports which began to be circulated, of an intention to aggrandize himself at the expense of the nobility, the appointment was evidently a measure of judicious and honourable policy.

But whilst engaged in preparations for his expedition into England, the state of the commerce of the kingdom, which had been greatly deteriorated during the troubles, attracted his attention. The advantage which Scotland derived from her foreign commercial intercourse was too important to be soon forgotten; and the heroic and faithful conduct of the Flemings, at the siege of Berwick, was too recent not to be dwelt upon with grateful remem-

brance. It appears, from a very interesting document recently brought to light, that in his own name, and that of Andrew Moray, appointed by the community of Scotland leaders of their army, he addressed a letter to the municipal authorities of the free towns of Hamburg and Lubeck, returning them warm acknowledgments for their attention to the interests of Scottish commerce, as well as for their prompt assistance and advice to their countrymen, who traded to these towns, in all their transactions. "Thanks be to God," says he, "the kingdom of Scotland has been recovered during the war from the power of the English; and we request you, therefore, to inform your merchants, that you shall now have free and safe access to every part within the realm, for themselves and their commodities."

After despatching his mission to Flanders, he returned to his military preparations; and, in the organization of the army for the invasion of England, enforced a strict system of discipline, and anxiously superintended the arrival of the levies. The details of the muster, and of the method which he adopted to enforce the levies, are given by an ancient and authentic historian, who says, "He caused returns of the exact number of fighting men, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, to be given by every county or shire, by every barony and lordship, by every city, royal burgh, village, and even hamlet; so that, without his knowledge, no single person could be absent, on any pretence whatever, from the array; and, to enforce obedience, he ordered a strong gallows to be erected in every barony and market town, upon which all who fled from the summons, and could allege no good excuse for absence, were ordered to be hanged." Nor is the reader to consider that this was a mere nominal order.—It was most vigorously enforced, as the burgesses of Aberdeen experienced, when they least expected it: for Wallace, when the army was on its march towards England, having received notice that several of the burgesses of Aberdeen, and others in that quarter, had disobeyed his summons to appear when called upon, he hurried back to the north, at the head of a small body of his cavalry, where, on apprehending the offenders, those whose excuses were inadmissible, he ordered for immediate execution; after which he rejoined his troops with

such speed, that it was scarcely known he had been absent.

Having issued a proclamation for every one capable of bearing arms to assemble on Roslin Moor, an immense multitude assembled. The most vigorous and best equipped were then selected; and having thus embodied a sufficient number for his intended invasion, Wallace excited their ardour by a short and spirit-stirring address, in which, after pointing out the murders and robberies, which they had suffered from the armies of the usurper, that now having expelled their enemies from their native country, it was now their duty to make the English repay their severe losses, as far as was in their power; and told them that united as they were, with only one glorious object in view, they had nothing but victory to expect—Scotland had been stripped of her wealth by their late oppressors, and now when it was in their power, it was their duty, as well as their interest, to recover it, and to punish the aggressors. The army then proceeded in high spirits towards the English frontier—their leader rightly judging, that by withdrawing so many men, a larger quantity of provisions would remain for those left behind; and, by adopting this measure, his soldiers also, while they escaped from the pestilence which had appeared in Scotland—occasioned, doubtless, by the multitude of putrid carcasses which remained exposed after the recent carnage—would be moreover rewarded for their past labours, by the riches they would find in the more flourishing regions of the south, which, having enjoyed a long interval of peace, might be expected to be overflowing with that description of wealth most desirable in their estimation.

Such was the terror inspired by the approach of the Scots, that nearly the whole population of Northumberland flocked into Newcastle, or took refuge in the more distant provinces and castles, accompanied by their wives and children, and crowding the highways with flocks and herds, and waggons laden with furniture and provisions. The Scots, to whom plunder was a principal object, delayed their advance on being made aware of this wholesale desertion; and Wallace, as if he had changed his original intention, threw out indications of a retrograde movement into Scotland, in order to deceive the inhabitants into a speedy return to their homes. This

had the desired effect; the poor Northumbrians, weary of their banishment, returned to their farms and hamlets—the herds and flocks were once more put to pasture on their accustomed hills—the children resumed their former amusements, and the labours of the country were again proceeded within apparent peace and security, when our hero, who only waited the welcome information, rushed like a minister of supreme vengeance into the heart of the happy district, and reduced it within the space of a few days into the condition of a wide and blackened desert. In this indiscriminate ravage, cottage, tower, and temple went to the ground; neither sex, nor age, nor infancy, were spared; and the memory of the recent and indiscriminate massacre, perpetrated by Edward at Berwick, in which seventeen thousand of their countrymen had been put to the sword—without regard to sex, age, or infancy—appears to have wrought up the Scottish army to a pitch of fury and revenge, which it was difficult fully to gratify, and entirely impossible in any way to control. The havoc made, and the spoils they collected, are feelingly described by the English authors of the period. Langtoft thus expresses himself:—

“ To werre than ros thei eft, tille God thei mad a vowe,
That no thing suld be left, that myght to Ingland prowē,
Mercy suld none haue, tille alle thei suld do wo,
Kirke suld no man saue, bot brenne ther in and slo.
In Northumberland ther first thei bigan,
And alle that com tille hande, they slouh and ouer ran.
To Flandres tille Edward tithings men him sent,
That Scottis com in hard, the North is nere alle brent,
And more salle yit be born, bot if we haf so coure,
Nocht standes them biforn, toun, castelle, nor toure.”

It is not easy to give a more striking representation of this dreadful visitation than that which is conveyed in the words of Hemingford, who was an eye-witness. He says—“At this time the Scots took up their quarters in the forest of Rothebery; nor was there any one to make them afraid, whilst the praise of God, and the services of religion, were not heard in any church or monastery throughout the country from Newcastle-upon-Tyae to the gates of Carlisle. All the monks, canons regular, and ministers of religion, along with the whole body of the people, had fled from the face of the Scots, who were permitted to pass their whole time in one continued

scene of slaughter, burning and rapine, from the Feast of St. Luke to St. Martin's day; nor was any one found to oppose them, except the soldiers of the garrison of Berwick, and of other castles hard by, who ventured from their walls, and cut off a few stragglers in the rear."

Wallace having summoned in all his plundering parties, and concentrated his army, directed his march towards Carlisle, which was at this time strongly fortified, and well provided for a siege, both from the state of its garrison, and the number and magnitude of its warlike engines; the Scots summoned it to surrender, in very haughty terms, despatching a priest as their envoy, who thus addressed the citizens:—"My master, William the Conqueror, bids you, to wit, that if you regard your own lives, and are anxious to spare the effusion of blood, you will give up your city and castle, which, if you do, your lives and members, and worldly goods shall be safe from harm; but if not, he will take your city by storm, and utterly exterminate both you and it."—"And who is this Conqueror?" said one of the hardy burghers of Carlisle. "It is he" replied the envoy, "whom you call William Wallace."—"Go back, then, and inform him, that our sovereign hath delivered to us, for his own royal behoof, and that of his heirs, the custody and defence of this city and castle; nor do we imagine that it would be at all agreeable to him, or that he would ratify the transaction, were we to surrender it to your Lord William, which we have no intention of doing; but return whence you came, and tell him that if he is so eager to possess it, he may come like a courageous conqueror, as we have no doubt he is, and storm the walls, and make himself master, if he can, of the city and the castle, with all their contents." This brave defiance, which was accompanied by a muster of the soldiers upon the walls, and a formidable array of engines ready to discharge their missiles on any who might have the hardihood to approach, Wallace did not think it proper to accept; for the symptoms of a severe winter began to appear, and from the want of battering engines, with which he appears to have been totally unprovided, it was probable, that even if successful, the siege would have detained his army far beyond the time it was prudent to remain in England. He retired therefore, from Carlisle, and marching through the middle of the forest of Inglewood, carried his ravages through Cumberland and

Allendale, as far as Derwentwater and Cockermouth. They were now about to enter the county of Durham, and to carry fire and sword into the district which was regarded, with peculiar veneration, as the sacred territory of St. Cuthbert, when the sky suddenly became dark and cloudy; the wind howled frightfully through the woods, and a tremendous storm of hail, accompanied by an intense frost broke upon the heads of the soldiers, with a violence which precluded all advance. It is probable, that in this dark age, the mind of the Scottish leader was impressed with a serious belief, that the saint had manifested his wrath against the meditated sacrilege, and had armed the storm and the elements in his defence. It is certain at least, that he abstained from entering the sacred territory, and directing his averted wrath against the counties to the south of the Tyne. The frost had set in with uncommon severity, and the Scots, who had created a desert around them, began also to dread the miseries of famine, as well as the inclemency of the season. Their encampments could now be traced by the frozen bodies of those who had perished during the night from the intensity of the cold. Under these circumstances Wallace gave orders for their return to Scotland.

In the Scottish army, which at this time invaded England, there was a large body of Galwegians—a set of men of peculiarly fierce, cruel, and intractable habits, whom, since the days of David I., no discipline had been able to control, whose ferocity no advance in the arts of civilization had been sufficient to subdue, and whose numbers and bravery rendered their desertion from the army, or their remaining in Scotland in a state of discontent or insurrection, a matter of equal danger to the state. In the great invasion of England, which was conducted by David I., one hundred and fifty years previous to this, the insubordination and inhumanity of the troops had disgraced the character of the army, and nearly cost the king his life; and now, after the lapse of so long a period, little change had taken place in their national habits. They plundered the churches and monasteries with the same indifference as any ordinary dwelling; they hesitated not to slay the priests on the steps of the altar, and to drag the forms of suppliant age, or shrieking beauty, from the holiest asylum, to which they had fled for refuge. Indeed, the splendour of the Catholic

churches at this period—the rich chalices—the golden cups and patens—the embroidered robes and jewelled altar-cloths—the velvet palls and massy censers, crosiers, and mitres, which were to be found in the treasury or wardrobe-rooms of the various religious houses, offered a prize to an invading army, which few, even of the Scottish soldiers, were able to resist; and which Wallace, who had so lately witnessed the intrusion of a large body of English ecclesiastics upon the Scottish livings, might not, according to his rude notions of retaliatory justice, think it either advisable or necessary to discountenance.

The Scottish leader, however, interposed his authority, on one occasion, to check these sacrilegious excesses; and the circumstances in which his interference took place illustrate, in a striking manner, the habits of the soldiers, and the character of their chief. In their advance, the army had plundered the monastery and chapel of Hexham, which was dedicated to St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland; and, from its spiritual affinity to the Scottish church, had been spared by David I. when he invaded Northumberland. It had not, however, been so unpitifully sacked and destroyed by Wallace's soldiers as many other places; and when the Scottish army passed onward in its destructive progress, two monks, who had fled from the convent with the rest of their brethren, crept fearfully from their places of concealment, and returning to their former residence, began to repair the ravages, and to cleanse the holy places from the blood by which they had been desecrated and polluted. It happened, however, that Wallace retreated far sooner than had been expected; when engaged in these pious duties, the alarm and tumult of the returning army struck upon the ears of the unhappy brethren, and ere they had time to fly, the long spears of the Scottish soldiers were at their breasts. "Show us where you have concealed your treasures," cried they; "lead us to your secret hoards." "Alas! you know best where these are," answered the trembling monks; "for you have already taken all in your first visit." "It is false," was the reply to this timid remonstrance; "and you shall lose your lives if you do not quickly obey us." A threat which would undoubtedly have been fulfilled, had not Wallace himself, at this moment, entered the oratory in

full armour, and rescuing the trembling monks from the brutal hands which were laid upon them, and requested one of them to perform mass. The monk obeyed, and Wallace, marshalling his soldiers in a circle round the altar, by his looks and gestures compelled them to be silent. When it came to the elevation of the host, the Scottish chief reverently stepped aside for a short interval to disarm himself; but his absence, even for an instant, at once loosened the reins of discipline, and he returned to witness a dreadful scene. The soldiers broke in upon the holy ceremony, snatched the cup from the hand of the officiating priest, tore off the golden coverlet, seized the golden paten on which the sacred wafer was deposited, and stript the place of its holiest ornaments, whilst the priest in horror at the daring sacrilege, and trembling for his life, clung to the rails of the altar. The return of Wallace could not prevent this shocking scene, but he instantly commanded the most violent amongst the plunderers to be seized and put to death. "Remain beside me," he said to the terrified monks; "it is here only you will be safe. My soldiers are evil disposed. I cannot justify, and I dare not punish them." To prevent also, as much as lay in his power, the recurrence of such disorders, he granted to the monks and their convent his letters of protection, in which he associates with his own the name of Andrew Moray; and whilst he gives the precedence to this useful baron, it may be remarked, that the style which he assumes, is simply, "Leader of the Scottish army, in the name of an illustrious prince, John, King of Scotland," a decisive proof, that at this period, which was the 8th of November, 1297, Wallace had not been chosen governor of Scotland by any party in the state, though several historians assert that he was elected to that high office immediately after the battle of Stirling. The letter of protection itself is a curious document, as one of the few authentic memorials which remain of this extraordinary man. It runs in the following terms:—"Andrew Moray and William Walays, leaders of the Scottish army, in the name of an illustrious prince, John, by the grace of God, and the consent of the people, King of Scots, to all the subjects of the said kingdom to whom these letters may come, greeting: know ye, that in the name of the said king, we have taken under his peace and protection, and under ours also, the prior and

convent of Hexildesham, in Northumberland, his lands, his men, his whole possessions of moveable and immoveable property. Wherefore, we strictly prohibit any one from inflicting, either upon their persons, lands, or goods, any grievance or attack, or injury, under the penalty of forfeiting his estate to our lord, the king; and we declare, that whoever shall slay any member or members of the same religious house, shall do so under the pain of death and dismembration." Along with this general protection, which was to last only for a year, a letter was given by Wallace, which granted to any monk of Hexham, the privilege of immediate access to himself, or to his colleague. After this, as the winter had set in with uncommon severity, he collected the various divisions of his army, which were scattered about for plunder in various directions, and after a desolating visit of three weeks, in which the three border counties had been reduced to grievous distress, they advanced to Newcastle, but finding the garrison prepared to stand a siege, they contented themselves with ravaging the adjacent country; and having collected the booty, no doubt, as they drove home their lowing and bleating prey from the rich pastures of the English border counties, considered that they were merely removing their own property, of which they had been unjustly deprived by the tyranny of the usurper.

English writers have been eloquent in their exposition of the barbarous cruelties and sacrilegious murders committed during this invasion; and from their total silence respecting the atrocities of their own countrymen, who were permitted to murder their lay and clerical victims indiscriminately, not even excepting the nuns, whose sex, independent of every other consideration, ought to have been their protection, have endeavoured to fix the charge of exclusive barbarity on the arms of Scotland. "This is all natural enough," says an eloquent writer, "and quite consistent with that national prejudice, by which the people of every country are more or less imbued; but it is painfully mortifying, when we find Scotchmen, of acknowledged talent and penetration, (Lord Hailes is here alluded to,) forgetting what is due to themselves and their country; and a weak fear of being thought illiberal, following humility in the train of such authors, and echoing their reflections; or favouringly assenting to their *ex parte* statements, in place of standing and

showing the world, that their countrymen, in resorting to such severities, merely exercised a system of fair retaliation, for the purpose of repressing enormities of the deepest dye, committed in support of an aggravation of the most unparalleled baseness. Whilst Wallace was thus successfully prosecuting the cause of his country's independence, his efforts, at the same time, were becoming daily more beneficial to the real liberties of the very people to whom he was opposed. Elated first, by the conquest of Wales, and afterwards by that of Scotland, Edward had already begun to stretch forth the iron rod of oppression over the legitimate subjects of his own native kingdom: and, trusting to the assistance he should receive from the barons of his newly acquired conquests, who, he might naturally suppose, would not be found reluctant to act as instruments in holding their late conquerors in subjection, he assumed towards the nobles of England an air of haughty superiority that awakened their jealousy, and alarmed their fears."

During the time the Scottish army was engaged in ravaging the northern counties of England, Lord Robert Clifford collected the strength of Carlisle and Cumberland, and twice invaded Annandale with an army of twenty thousand foot, and one hundred horse. On passing the Solway, it was proclaimed by sound of trumpet, that every soldier should plunder for himself, and keep his own booty; on hearing which, the infantry, with undisciplined rapacity, dispersed, and the horse alone remained together. In consequence of this, nothing was effected worthy of so powerful an army. Three hundred and eight Scots were slain, ten villages or hamlets burnt, and a few prisoners taken. This happened at Christmas.

During the time that Wallace remained in England, his army was occasionally renewed; for, as soon as the men belonging to one clan or parish, had collected a sufficient quantity of booty, they were allowed to return with it to their homes, while their places were supplied by fresh numbers of not less hungry adventurers. By such arrangements, the spoil of their enemies was pretty equally divided throughout the several districts of Scotland, and the inhabitants began to experience the comforts of returning plenty. Having, in this manner, enriched his country at the expense of her enemies, our intrepid hero returned—poor, it is true in wealth, but

rich in fame—to behold the prosperity he had so gallantly achieved. The whole body of the Scottish aristocracy, upon the return of this victorious leader, at the head of a powerful army, found themselves in a perilous and awkward dilemma. He, whom they hated and had deserted, was now the most popular man in Scotland; he had succeeded not only without their assistance, but in direct opposition to their united efforts, in restoring freedom to his country; he had recovered its castles out of the hands of the enemy, he had gloriously triumphed over the army of England in a great battle; had slain or expelled the governors of Edward, from the land which they had oppressed, and had invaded England, and supported his army in the heart of the enemy's own territory. All this could not fail to awaken the envy of the nobles, who could ill brook the popularity of one whose actions had thrown them so much in the shade; and his praise, which they heard sounded on all sides, rung in their ears like so many reproaches against themselves, who, possessing wealth and power, either could not, or from treachery, would not, do what he, so much their inferior in wealth and influence, had taken in hand and finished, with glory to himself, and honour and profit to his country. Hence the private heart-burnings which arose among these noblemen, whose consciences whispered that they had been either traitors or sluggards when the liberty of their country was at stake.

The next proceeding of Wallace was of a decided and important nature. Conscious of the strength and influence he now possessed, having shown to the nation that he was able to be their governor, as well as worthy of the high honour; he was also aware, that to defeat the opposition of the nobles, who, he knew, were his enemies, and to enable him to defy the vengeance of Edward, he required a strength and authority which he had not yet possessed, he, therefore, shortly after his return to Scotland, assembled a meeting which was held at the Forest Kirk in Selkirkshire, and attended by the Earl of Lennox, Sir William Douglas, and others of the principal nobility, besides a number of his personal friends and followers, and by their voice was elected Governor of Scotland in the name of King John, and with consent of the community of Scotland. The particulars of this transaction are unfortunately involved in much obscurity, and no

record of the nomination of this great man to the supreme authority in the state has reached our times. That, with the exception of the proud barons who had all along systematically opposed him, the elevation was joyfully confirmed by a nation of whom he had ever been the idol and the preserver, is beyond all doubt; and it is not improbable, that a few of the nobles and lesser barons who had always joined his party, along with some who began to dread his increasing power, may have assembled to give their sanction to a choice which they could not resist; yet the total omission of the usual mention of the clergy and nobility of Scotland, in the style which he assumed shortly after his election, renders this uncertain. His own army, and the people of Scotland, were undoubtedly the main instruments in raising Wallace to this honourable distinction.

But in whatever way the election took place, the event itself was productive of very important effects. The elevation of a simple knight, whom they regarded as of mean extraction in comparison with themselves, to the supreme power in the state, was an insult to their feudal pride, and to every feeling and association in which they had been educated, which the Scottish nobles could not easily forgive, and the secret conviction that Wallace despised them for their pusillanimous part which they had acted, and that he now possessed the power to enforce their obedience to his authority, created in their bosoms a conflict of fear and hatred, which had the most fatal influence on the national cause.

Strengthened by this high title, which he had so well deserved, and which the common people believed was ratified by the express approval of St. Andrew, who presented to our hero a sacred sword, to be used in his battles against the English, he proceeded to exercise his authority in the manner that he conceived would be most conducive to the general interest and welfare of the kingdom. He had often experienced the difficulties which feudal vassalage presented to his efforts on behalf of the national independence. The numerous serfs who were retained in bondage by the more powerful barons, could be either restrained from taking up arms, or withdrawn at the caprice of their masters, even when their services were of the greatest importance. A power so dangerous in the hands of a party comparatively small, had been

productive of the most ruinous consequences. To reform a system so pregnant with mischief, and one, at the same time, so much in favour with the prejudices of the age, required wisdom and energy of no ordinary kind, and of which few men were possessed. Aware of the opposition which an open and declared attempt to emancipate these feudal retainers would create, he attacked the system in the only part where it appeared to be vulnerable. Having divided the country into districts, he caused a muster-roll to be made out, as on a former occasion, containing the names of all who were capable of bearing arms, between the ages of sixteen and sixty. These he divided and subdivided in a manner peculiarly his own. Over every four men he appointed a fifth; over every nine, a tenth; over every nineteenth, a twentieth; and thus continued an ascending scale of disciplined authority, up to the officer who commanded a thousand men. In the different parishes, gibbets were again erected, to enforce obedience to these regulations; and whoever refused to appear when summoned for the defence of their country, unless they could show some valid excuse for their non-attendance, were hung up as an example to others. Those barons who interposed their authority to prevent their vassals from joining the ranks of the patriots, were either punished by imprisonment, or confiscation of property.

In order to concentrate the strength and resources of the country, and establish the unanimity so necessary for its defence, he summoned all the vassals of the Scottish crown to meet him at Perth. An anecdote of the Earl of Dunbar illustrates the feelings with which the aristocracy received the orders of the new governor, in a very striking manner. The great power and military experience of this baron, joined to the circumstance of his occupying a fortress, which was considered as the key of the eastern part of the kingdom, made it an object of some importance that his allegiance should be unquestionable. An early partisan of Edward, he had as yet shown no disposition to relinquish his unnatural connection with the enemy. Having thought proper to absent himself from this convention, the nobles unanimously agreed upon proceeding against him without delay.—Wallace, however, proposed the more gentle expedient of remonstrance, before having recourse to extremities. To

this powerful lord Wallace accordingly addressed his summons, requiring him, by his authority of governor of Scotland, immediately to attend the convention of the nobility at Perth. When the messenger presented the writ, the earl made a profound reverence, and receiving it with a well-affected humility, observed that he had been seldom honoured by so singular a message. "It seems to me a strange thing," he continued, "that Wallace should reign as governor, and truly I esteem it a proof of the great scarcity of kings in this poor land: yet, till better acquainted with his title, I must take the liberty of declining any allegiance to the King of Kyle, of whom I have yet to discover that I ever held a foot of land. What will you more? I am lord of mine own—as free to reign in this land as ever was prince or king. I am a freeman, and I despise your summons."—In this arrogant and ironical reply, the earl scarcely exaggerated his own power. He held one of the largest, and, from its situation, one of the most important districts in Scotland. Besides his almost impregnable fortress of Dunbar, his dominions on the borders, between the two kingdoms, were protected by a chain of seven fortalices, which, from the warlike vigilance with which they were garrisoned, and kept in repair, went by the familiar name of the *Earl's seven War-steeds*; and the passes communicating between his territory and the two countries on either side, were of such a nature as to be easily held by inferior numbers against a far superior force. But Wallace, insulted by his reply, and aware of the necessity of supporting his authority by an immediate vengeance, proceeded with a select body of four hundred men, and attacked the haughty baron with a combination of force and skill which all his power could not resist.—Defeating him, in the first instance, at Innerwick, he next drove him with loss from Cockburn's-path (originally Colbrand's-path), a strong pass eight miles from Dunbar, and thence expelled him, though reinforced by the English, from stronghold to stronghold, from valley to valley, till he left him without lands, or house, or vassals, a pensioned fugitive on the bounty of England. He then garrisoned his castle of Dunbar, which he entrusted to Sir Christopher Seton, and levelled to the ground his seven border fortalices, or, in the warlike

pleasantry of the times, heughed, that is, cut the hamstrings of Colpatrick's war-steeds.

In a short time, such were the effects of his firm and courageous dealing in the government, that the most powerful of the nobility were compelled to submit to his authority, although they envied him his high elevation; and, whenever an opportunity presented itself, espoused the cause of the King of England. But although few of the Earls had joined him, the lesser barons and gentry repaired in great numbers to the standard of the governor, and supported him with all their forces.

Wallace proceeded, in the exercise of his authority as governor, to reward those amongst his faithful followers to whose bravery and perseverance he owed so much of his success, and to punish his enemies; and, despising the jealousy of a great portion of the nobility, to adopt and enforce those public measures which he considered necessary for securing the liberty and prosperity of the country. Of the various grants which were then conferred upon his partisans, one remarkable document alone remains, by which the office of Constable of the castle of Dundee, with its rights, liberties, and privileges, was bestowed upon a brave baron, Alexander de Skirmishur, (Srymgeour,) in consequence of his faithful service and support to the kingdom, in bearing the royal banner in the army of Scotland at the time when the charter was granted, which is dated at Torphichen, on the 28th of March, 1298. Subsequently to this period, his power and popularity were rapidly on the increase. Fordun says—“Within a short time after he was appointed guardian, he compelled, by the vigour of his character, and the integrity of his government, the whole of the nobility of Scotland to submit to his authority, whether with or without their inclination. And if any one among them was so hardy as to refuse obedience, he knew well how to restrain and overawe him, committing his person to prison until he showed himself subservient to his commands. By these means all were reduced to a state of tranquillity amongst themselves; and having effected this, he addressed himself to the expulsion of the enemy from the castles and fortresses which they still held.”

CHAPTER X.

Battle of Stanmore. Battle of Blackironside. Preparations of the English for Invading Scotland. Description of the English Army. Wallace's Plan for the Campaign. Edward invades Scotland. Extraordinary state in which he finds it. Advances to Templeliston. Famine in the English Army. Edward compelled to issue orders for a Retreat. Treachery of the Earls of Dunbar and Angus.

THE general revolt of the Scots, and that rapid success with which it was attended, so destructive of Edward's power in that country, determined the English regency to summon a parliament at London, to concert measures for the suppression of the rebellion. To this assembly came the Earl of Norfolk, and the Earl of Hereford—the one Marshall, and the other Constable of England—with so powerful a body of retainers, that they overawed, as was their intention, its proceedings. We have previously hinted at the disagreement between Edward and his nobles; and these earls being aware of the trying emergency in which the rebellion of the Scots had placed the king, they declared that no aids or levies should be granted against the Scots till such time as their grievances were redressed, and the Great Charter, and the Charter of the Forests, were ratified, along with an additional clause, which prohibited any aid or tollage from being exacted without the consent of the prelates, nobles, knights, and other freemen. Edward was startled when he heard of these demands. His affairs still detained him in Flanders, where he had been informed of the victory at Stirling; but he appears at first to have undervalued the danger. He now learnt its consequences: the total expulsion of the English—the subsequent invasion of the border counties—the elevation of Wallace—and the desertion of the nobility. For all this he was little prepared, amid the embarrassments of his continental politics, and the secret but ill-concealed disgusts of his own nobility; yet, opposing to the difficulties with which he was surrounded, that calm and intrepid resolution which was so striking

a feature in the character of this great king, he determined to make every sacrifice to remain on good terms with his barons. He, accordingly, after three days' deliberation, consented to confirm all the charters which had been sent over to him; and having by this means wisely secured the affections of his nobility, he directed letters to the earls and barons of England, commanding them, as they valued his honour, and that of the whole kingdom, to meet at York on the 14th of January, and thence, under the Earl of Surrey, to proceed into Scotland, and put down the rebellion of that nation. At the same time he addressed writs to the great men of Scotland, requiring them, on their fealty, to attend the muster at York, under the penalty of being considered and dealt with as traitors.

These seasonable favours granted to the nobility, with some additional clauses which were highly favourable to the liberty of the subject, and the good grace with which Edward bestowed them, although, in truth they were extorted from him much against his inclination, rendered the king highly popular, so that at York, on the day appointed, there was a great muster of the military force of the kingdom. There came the Earl Marshall and the Great Constable of the kingdom; the Earl of Surrey, the king's lieutenant against the Scots; the Earls of Gloucester and Arundel; Lord Henry Percy; John de Wake; Guido, son of the Earl of Warwick; and many other powerful earls and barons. Having waited in vain for the Scottish nobles whom Edward had summoned to attend—an order which, as the result showed, the dread of Wallace rather than the love of their country compelled them to disobey—the English nobles appointed a general muster of their forces to be held eight days after, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, proposing from thence to march against the enemy. Here they accordingly met, and the army, both in number and equipments was truly formidable. There were two thousand heavy cavalry, armed both horse and man, at all points, along with two thousand light horse, and a hundred thousand foot, comprehending a large body of Welsh levies. The English nobles also, who on former occasions, when disgusted with the arbitrary conduct of the king, had sent their feudal services, but remained themselves in their castles, now attended in great force. With this force they

marched across the border, and advanced to Roxburgh. This important fortress was then invested by Wallace; and the garrison, worn out by a long siege, were in a state of great distress when the army of Surrey made its appearance, and the Scots thought it prudent to retire. After relieving their wounded countrymen, the English skirmished as far as Kelso, and returned to occupy Berwick, which had been in the hands of the Scots, since the battle of Stirling. They found it deserted, and brought a joyful relief to the castle, the garrison of which had stoutly held out, while the rest of the town was in possession of the enemy.

Edward, in the meantime, having learnt in Flanders the strength of the army which awaited his orders, was restless and impatient till he had joined them in person. His anger against the Scots, and his determination to inflict a signal vengeance upon their perfidy, on again daring to defend their liberties, had induced him to make every sacrifice, that he might proceed with an overwhelming force against Scotland. For this purpose he hastened to conclude a truce with France, and to refer their disputes to the judgment of Boniface the pope. At Berwick, the Earl of Surrey received a letter from Edward, which informed him that having finally concluded his truce with the king of France, he meant instantly to sail for England, and to join his army in person, which he would straightway lead against his rebels in Scotland; and he therefore requested him to suspend all farther operations till his arrival at head-quarters. On receiving these commands, the Earl of Surrey immediately dismissed the greater part of that immense force, which it would have been ruinous to have supported at the expense of the country for any length of time; and having retained with him a select body of twenty thousand spearmen and archers, with fifteen hundred horse, he awaited the farther commands of his sovereign.

That indefatigable and enterprising prince had now sailed from Flanders, and arriving at Sandwich, with a speed which seemed far too slow to his impetuous temper, he scarcely planted his foot in his own dominions, when the whole disposable force was summoned to meet him on the 24th of June. He directed his writs to the earls and barons, with two knights of every shire, and

the representatives from the towns and burghs to attend his parliament, to be held in the city of York; and, at the same time, reiterated his commands to the nobility of Scotland, unless they chose to be treated as vassals who had renounced their allegiance, to attend the said parliament. According to Abernethy, he also addressed letters to Wallace, and in a strain more impassioned than courteous, upbraided him for his audacity in disturbing the tranquillity of Scotland, and in presuming afterwards to invade England—a line of conduct which, he observed, he would not have ventured upon, had he (Edward) been in the country; and concluded by commanding Wallace to redeem his errors by an immediate submission to his authority. To these letters Wallace replied, that in availing himself of the absence of Edward, in order to regain the liberty of his country he had done no more than his duty, and that the baseness lay with the English monarch in taking advantage of the disunion of a free people to enslave them. As to invading England, he had done so in order to indemnify Scotland for the injuries she had so unjustly sustained; and in respect to submission, as he intended soon to be in England again, he would then give him his answer in person.

The active and intrepid Governor was instantly at the heels of his messenger, and after a hurried march, came in sight of the English army, at Stanmore, on the 20th of March. Some historians say, that Edward's force, though much superior in numbers to that of Wallace, was composed chiefly of raw militia, hastily raised, few or none of his veterans having yet been landed, and that the English monarch, struck with the appearance and admirable discipline of the Scots, and, unwilling to risk his fame in a conflict so doubtful,—when about five hundred paces from the enemy, turned his banners and marched off the field. Wallace, afraid of an ambush, restrained his soldiers from the pursuit, and repressed their ardour by telling them, that the victory they had already gained was the more glorious; as it was got without the shedding of blood, and against the first captain of the age, at the head of an army which, to all appearance, was able, from its numbers, to have swallowed them up; and, concluded his address, by ordering thanksgivings to Heaven for so great an interposition in their favour.

This account, however, is not corroborated by any other historian. The English historians allege that the king was not present; and in this we are of the same opinion. Edward only arrived in England on the 14th of March, and from the multiplicity of matters of important business he had to transact, we think it was utterly impossible that he could be at Stanmore on the 20th. That the Scots did come in sight of the English army on the borders is not at all unlikely; or that the latter should decline risking a general engagement, after their late disastrous reverses, without the presence of their king, who was daily expected, is extremely probable, as it was Edward's express orders to suspend all farther operations till his arrival. It may also be observed, that the charters of their rights, though granted at Ghent, had not, as yet, been confirmed in England. The conduct of the English leaders, therefore, under all the circumstances, may be considered as highly prudent and judicious.

But if the Scots were disappointed in not coming to an engagement, with their enemies at Stanmore, it was not long before they had an opportunity of exhibiting their valour. Aymer de Vallance, son of the Earl of Pembroke, a youth at that time, only eighteen years of age, had raised himself high in the estimation of Edward, by the ready manner in which he accompanied him to Flanders. The abilities and discretion, which he soon displayed, obtained for him so much of the confidence of his royal master, that he was employed in various important matters of state. On the truce with the king of France being concluded—for the furtherance of which De Vallance was appointed a commissioner—Edward it appears, had ordered him to sail for Scotland, with the force under his command, for the purpose of co-operating in the invasion which he meditated on his arrival in England. Various circumstances contributed to retard the projected attempt, and it was not till midsummer, that Aymer de Vallance and Sir John Siward, (a renegade Scot, son of the traitor of Dunbar,) landed in Fife, with a considerable body of troops, and began to lay waste the country. Their destructive operations however, were soon interrupted by the arrival of Wallace, and a portion of his army, who instantly attacked them in the extensive forest of Black-ironside, and after an obstinate conflict, the invaders were defeated, with the loss of upwards of fifteen hundred men.

This battle appears to have been a protracted forest fight, which lasted for the greater part of the day; and the heat of the weather induced the combatants at times, as if by mutual consent, to pause amid the deadly strife. On one of these occasions, Wallace, it is said, unclasped the helmet of a dead Englishman, and repairing to a neighbouring spring, still unstained with the carnage of the day, he dipped it into the stream, and continued to carry the water along the ranks of his fatigued soldiers. When he had in this manner allayed their thirst, he afterwards partook himself; and declared that the cooling beverage was more grateful to his palate, than the richest wines he had ever tasted. The effect which this kindness produced on the minds of his followers, was evinced by the vigour they displayed in the charge, which they soon afterwards made on the enemy.

Meanwhile Edward assembled his parliament at York, but the peremptory commands he had sent to the Scottish nobles to attend, they found it either inconvenient or impossible to obey, and those amongst them who had attended upon the king in Flanders, upon his embarkation for England, forsook his service, and resorted to the king of France. In the interval between the meeting of his parliament at York, and the appointed muster of his army at Roxburgh, Edward, with that mistaken devotion, which could implore the blessing of Heaven upon his most ambitious aggressions, took a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. John of Beverly, from whence it is probable he carried away the sacred standard belonging to this religious house, which was held in much veneration, and had accompanied the English army, in its expedition into Scotland in 1296, under the charge of Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham.

On coming to Roxburgh, he found himself at the head of an army, even more formidable in their number, and more splendid in their equipment, than that which had been collected by the Earl of Surrey six months before. He had seven thousand—three thousand armed horse, or, as they are denominated by an ancient monkish historian, *equi cooperti*, “because,” says he, “they were clothed from head to tail in iron coverings, or in body clothes composed of steel rings interwoven with each other;” and four thousand light cavalry called *hobelars*. His infantry consisted at first of eighty thousand foot, mostly

Welsh and Irish; but these were soon strengthened by a powerful reinforcement from Gascony, amongst whom were five hundred horse, splendidly armed, and admirably mounted. Impatient, at the head of such an army, to come into immediate action, the English monarch had given orders to march, when he was met by a bold remonstrance, on the part of his own barons, who peremptorily refused to advance a single step against the enemy, till the king had confirmed by his oath, the charter of their liberties, and the charter of the forests; nor did they scruple to insinuate that they deemed this absolutely necessary, because the great seal had not been affixed to these deeds when the monarch was beyond seas, and on this ground they dreaded he might not consider himself bound to observe them. Edward although incensed at these unreasonable delays, did not esteem this a proper moment to resent them, but evaded their demand by bringing forward the Bishop of Durham, and the Earls of Surrey and Lincoln, who solemnly swore on the soul of their lord the king, that upon his return, having obtained by their assistance the victory over his enemies, he would instantly accede to their request. The nobility were obliged to be satisfied with this cautious and conditional promise, which he afterwards tried in every way to elude, and the army moved on against the enemy.

The English monarch, aware from former experience of the difficulty of supporting so numerous an army on the resources of a hostile and exhausted country, had assembled a fleet of victualling ships, which were ordered to sail round the coast, and, having entered the Frith of Forth, to await there the arrival of the army.

Meanwhile, Scotland, notwithstanding the late expulsion of its enemies, was little able to contend with the superior numbers and discipline of the army now led against it. It was cruelly weakened by the continued dissensions and jealousy of its nobility. Ever since the elevation of Wallace to the rank of Governor of Scotland, the great barons had envied his assumption of power; and, looking upon him as a person of ignoble birth, had seized all opportunities to despise and resist his authority. These selfish jealousies were increased by the terror of Edward's military renown, and in many, by their fear of losing their English estates; so that, at the very time, when an honest love of liberty, and a simultaneous spirit

of resistance, could alone have saved Scotland, its nobility deserted their country, and refused to act with the only man whose success and military talents were equal to the emergency. The governor, however, still endeavoured to collect the strength of the land. John Comyn of Badenoch, the younger, Sir John Stewart of Bonkill, Sir John Graham, and Macduff, the grand-uncle of the Earl of Fife, consented to act along with him; whilst some assert, that Robert Bruce, maintaining a suspicious neutrality, remained with a strong body of his vassals in the castle of Ayr.

Against all the formidable preparations of the enemy, and the lukewarmness of pretended friends, Wallace had little to oppose but the resources of his own resolute mind which was fertile in military expedients, and well acquainted with that species of war, which the nature of the country, and the circumstances in which he was placed, recommended as the best mode of resistance. His plan may be easily described. It was to avoid a general battle, and to draw the immense force of Edward into the heart of a country which had been purposely wasted of its subsistence; to entangle it in the woods and marshes; when famine had brought disease and discontent, and murmurs had compelled to a retreat, to attack the enemy in its state of suffering and disorganization, to harass it at every step, to cut off its foraging parties, to storm its encampment at night, yet become invisible by day, to be ever on the watch, and ever near at hand, yet to keep his troops so concealed in the woods and mountain passes, that it should be impossible for the English to bring him to an action: such was the outline of the campaign as laid down by Wallace, and few will be disposed to question its wisdom. It constituted, in truth, the same mode of warfare which was afterwards so ably, and so successfully pursued by Bruce, even after that great man was heartily supported by the principal body of the barons; but Wallace had still more cogent reasons for its adoption. These barons, he knew, were his enemies. Ever since his return from the invasion of England and his election as governor, they had regarded him with hatred. His consistent and indefatigable exertions in defence of his country's independence, offered a perpetual, though silent, rebuke to their vacillation and selfishness; his measures, for the arming and embodying

the whole disposable force of the realm, interfered with their feudal privileges, and trenched upon their individual rights over their vassals; and the unhesitating boldness and severity with which he inflicted punishment upon every offender or recusant, without respect to his rank or power, wounded their pride, and excited in their minds the bitter and mingled feelings of fear and resentment. We are not to wonder then, that, in the words of Fordun, it was the language of the Scottish nobility, "We will not have this man to rule over us." Nor is it at all singular, that Wallace, who was well aware of these sentiments, and anticipated that, on the first appearance of danger or defeat, the Scottish barons would be ready to desert him, should have adopted a system of defence, which placed as little power as possible in their hands; and the result of the campaign fully demonstrated the wisdom of his calculations.

Edward in the meantime advanced into Scotland at the head of his immense army, laying waste the country which he found perfectly defenceless and deserted, and eager for a sight of his enemies, promising himself an easy victory, and the complete subjugation of Scotland again. The sight of his enemies, however, was a gratification he was not permitted to enjoy; for not only was no man or woman to be seen, but the very signs of life and habitation had disappeared. No herd was in the stall, no flocks upon the mountains, no swine, no poultry, in the farm granges; the houses remained, but they consisted of bare walls, for the furniture had been removed; and to an army which could carry little provisions with it, and principally depended for support upon the plunder of the country through which it passed, the aspect presented by the untenanted apartments, the desolate hearths, and chimneys without smoke, was highly chilling and disheartening. But this was not all; the green crops had been cut down and carried away; the hay or grain which could not be transported, was reduced to heaps of blackened ashes, and the fields through which the English passed, presented on every side the appearance of an arid and miserable desert. Edward now felt that he had to do with a general, his superior in the stratagems of war, and with a whole people ready to sacrifice their individual wealth and comfort for their love of liberty: to secure the one for his friend, and the other

for his subjects, he would have sacrificed much; but he neither understood the high-souled honour of the leader, void of all personal aggrandizement, nor the feelings of the people who were devoted to their leader and their father-land. Trusting to his great fortune, and anticipating the speedy arrival of his fleet, he pressed forward through the deserted and desolate country.

The first annoyance he met with, was an attack upon some of the rear divisions of his army by the garrison of Dirleton, a strong castle, at that time the property of the noble and ancient family of the De Vaux, and which, even in the ruins which still remain, presents an appearance of great feudal magnificence and extent. Two other smaller fortalices, in the same district, appear also to have occasioned him some disturbance; and he immediately dispatched the Bishop of Durham, to besiege and reduce the castle of Dirleton, and to destroy the neighbouring strengths. This, however, was not so easy a task as had been anticipated. The castle proved too strong for the troops of the bishopric; he was driven from the walls with considerable loss; and as the force under his command was in want of provisions, as well as of a sufficient battering train, he sent Sir John Marmaduke to require reinforcements, and inform himself of the king's pleasure. Edward dismissed this messenger with a very characteristic reply. "Go back," said he, "and tell Anthony that he shall have no reinforcement from me. Methinks he is somewhat pacific; and it may be right to behave so when he is acting the bishop; but in his present business, let him forget his calling. As for you, Marmaduke," continued the king, "I have often been compelled to reprove you for too cruel exultation over the death of your enemies; but return whence you came, and be as relentless as you choose, you will my thanks, not my censure; but look you do not see my face again till these three castles, which have caused me so much annoyance, are levelled with the ground."

At this time the arrival of three English ships with provisions, brought a seasonable supply to the troops, which began to suffer all the misery of want in an exhausted; and apparently deserted country; and the prelate taking advantage of the recruited strength of his soldiers, led them to the assault of Dirleton, which proved successful; the garrison having stipulated before surren-

der that their lives should be spared. The Scots soon after abandoned the other two fortalices, which, in obedience to the orders of the king, were dismantled; and having performed this service, the only point of arms, as it was called, which had been achieved since the march of the army from Roxburgh, Anthony Beck rejoined the main body of the army.

Edward had determined to penetrate into the west of Scotland, and there he purposed to conclude the war; no one, however, was to be found, who could give him any information respecting the Scottish army; and he proceeded through Berwickshire to Lauder, and without a check, to Templeliston, now Kirkliston, a small town between Edinburgh and Linlithgow. Here he determined to make his head-quarters, in order to receive the earliest intelligence of his fleet, and, in case of accidents, to secure his retreat. Templeliston was situated within a few miles of the Frith of Forth; where, despairing of being able to compel him to come to battle, and fearful, by advancing further into the country, of being inextricably involved in the woods and morasses, and having his communication with his fleet and the capital entirely cut off, he determined to remain. The circumstances, indeed, in which he was already placed, were such as called for serious consideration. He had under his command an army exceeding a hundred thousand men, in a country which had been so unmercifully laid waste, in the first instance, by the Scots themselves, and afterwards by the invaders, that, within the common range of the foraging parties, not a blade of corn or fodder was to be collected, and not a hoof of cattle to be seen. If, to remedy this distress, the commanders themselves, or the light cavalry, in separate divisions, ventured to push off to any great distance into the woods, they were intercepted and cut off by the enemy, who, though invisible, were constantly on the alert; or they were involved in unwholesome marshes and interminable woods, from which they found it exceedingly difficult to extricate themselves, and where they found little else than hardship, privation, and disease. In the meantime, they could not fail to discover, that, whenever an advantage presented itself which called the enemy forth from their hiding-places, they appeared in considerable numbers, and in good equipment, with the spirit and freshness of troops

well supplied with every necessary, and confident in their leaders.

This state of things continued, till the troops began to suffer severely from want—a month having elapsed without any appearance of the fleet; and if this state of things lasted much longer, Edward saw that a retreat would be inevitable; he could not but admire the consummate sagacity evinced by Wallace; and he was heard to confess, that he was something more than an ordinary freebooter. At last, a few ships were seen off the coast, which brought a small supply; but the great body of the fleet was still detained by contrary winds, and a dangerous mutiny broke out in the camp. The Welsh troops had suffered from famine; and they were yet little reconciled to the yoke imposed upon them by Edward. A present of wine having been sent them by the king, their soldiers, in a paroxysm of intoxication and national antipathy, attacked the English quarters in the night, and inhumanly killed eighteen priests. Upon this the English cavalry flew to their weapons, and breaking in upon the Welsh, slew eighty-one of them. In the morning, the Welsh, of whom there were forty thousand in the army, exasperated at the death of their countrymen, threatened to join the Scots. “Let them do so,” said the king, with that intrepid calmness which never deserted him. “Let these forty thousand savage brawlers join the Scots. The day will come when I will chastise them both.” This day was, to all appearance, distant. Yet, though confident and cheerful to his soldiers, the sagacious Edward found himself out-generalled, and began to suffer intense anxiety. The want of provisions, in a short time, amounted to an absolute famine; the arrival of three more ships, which brought the painful intelligence, that the great body of the fleet was still detained by contrary winds, at Berwick, only quickened the general tendency to insubordination. The division of the cargoes of these ships among the higher officers, and the knights and barons, produced envy and discontent in the great body of the troops; and even for these there was not enough to appease the cravings of hunger, or to ward off the rapid approach of disease. Under such circumstances, no alternative was left to Edward; and, worn out by events which he could neither control nor counteract, he was reluctantly compelled to issue orders for a retreat to

Edinburgh, under the faint hope, that if the wind changed, he might still meet his fleet at Leith, and after refreshing his army, recommence operations against the wily enemy, with renewed vigour.

At this critical juncture, when the military skill and wisdom of the dispositions made by Wallace, became apparent, and when the moment to harass the invading army, suffering from famine, in its retreat had arrived; the base treachery of her nobles again destroyed Scotland, and rendered the excellent generalship of Wallace of no avail. Two Scottish lords, Patrick, Earl of Dunbar, (who had only lately joined the ranks of the patriot, evidently with the intention of betraying him) along with Comfraville Earl of Angus, a baron of English family, but who possessed a Scottish estate and title, sought the quarters of the Bishop of Durham, and informed him that the Scots were encamped not far off in the forest of Falkirk. The Scottish earls, who dreaded the resentment of Edward, on account of their late renunciation of allegiance, did not venture to seek the king in person, but sent their welcome intelligence by a page, adding that having heard of his intended retreat, it was the intention of Wallace to surprise him by a night attack, when he knew the army would be in confusion from the preparations for a retreat, and to hang upon and harass his rear. On receiving this information Edward could not conceal his joy. "Thanks be to God," he exclaimed—"thanks be to God who hitherto hath extricated me from every danger! They shall not need to follow me, since I shall forthwith go and meet them." Without a moment's delay, orders were issued for the soldiers to arm, and hold themselves ready to march. The king was the first to put on his armour, and mounting his horse, he rode from post to post in his wide encampment, hastening the preparations in person, and speaking familiarly and encouragingly to the soldiers, chiding the dilatory, and urging on the merchants, sutlers, and numerous camp followers to pack up their wares, and be ready to follow him. At length all was prepared, and at three o'clock the army was on its advance from Kirkliston to Falkirk, astonished at the sudden and total change of the plan, but aware, from the deliberate pace at which they marched, and the dispositions which were made, that they were proceeding against the enemy.

Late in the evening the mighty host reached a level moor, or heath, near Linlithgow, where they encamped for the night, but they were not allowed the refreshment of disarming themselves, but to hold themselves in readiness at a moment's notice. To use the striking language of Hemingford, whose information regarding the Scottish war was evidently derived from eye-witnesses, if not from actual observation:—"Each soldier slept upon the ground, and used none other pillow than his shield; each horseman had his horse, bridled and armed beside him; and the horses themselves tasted nothing but cold iron, champing their steel bits for want of better fodder." In the midst of his army lay the king himself, having no better couch than his meanest soldier, and sleeping on the ground in complete armour, whilst his single attendant, a page, held his war horse. The boy had either sunk into slumber or been careless, for Edward was awakened at midnight by a violent stroke upon his side, which he had received from the horse in changing its position. Those nearest him cried out that the king was wounded; and this, in the confusion of the night, was soon raised into a shout that the enemy were upon them, so that they hastily stood up in their defence; but the alarm subsided on the occasion becoming known to the troops, and they betook themselves to rest. Edward's wound was found to be of a serious description, but, when morning broke, he insisted on mounting his horse, and gave orders for the army to march.

CHAPTER XI.

March of the English Army. Battle of Falkirk. Treachery of Comyn.
Accounts of the Battle by English and Scottish Writers.

DAY was breaking as the army of England passed through Linlithgow in one long and variegated column. To those whose local situation enabled them to see this glittering array, the spectacle must have been fearfully interesting. Since the days of the Romans, the present army was perhaps the largest that had appeared in Scotland. The crusaders, about this period, had introduced many alterations into Europe; and the chivalrous King of England, who was no slow scholar in the military art, had, during his residence in Palestine, and his various expeditions to France, neglected no opportunity of making himself acquainted with every invention of the time that came under his notice. His present army, therefore, might justly be considered as the most perfect in discipline, equipment, and feudal splendour, that Christendom could boast of. As it approached, it seemed to lengthen—the interminable array issuing, as it were, from some inexhaustible source on the verge of the horizon: its glittering mazes, occasionally appearing and disappearing among the inequalities of the road, might be aptly compared to the undulating movements of one of those enormous serpents that figure in the pages of romance, some of whose coils are at times seen, while its extremities are concealed, amid the darkness of the den from which it is represented as issuing forth. Most of the inhabitants, who ventured from their hiding-places to peep at the unwelcome intruders, fled upon their approach.

The confused hum of this living mass increased as it advanced, till the deserted walls of Linlithgow resounded to the braying of clarions, the thunder of kettle-drums, and the prancing of war-steeds in flowing caparisons, bestrode by warriors mailed to the teeth, having long two-handed swords suspended from their girdles, while their right hands held lances, and their left supported

shields, painted with the various devices of their families.

Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, and Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, the Constable of England, led the first division. The second was under the command of the Bishop of Durham, who next appeared in this portentous march, attended by thirty-nine banners; for this haughty ecclesiastic spared no expense to render his retinue as magnificent as possible. In the third division, under the command of Edward, besides the royal standard, there waved the sacred banner of St. John of Beverley, those of St. George, St. Edmunds, and of Edward the Confessor, and also the ominous standard of Henry III.; by the unfurling of which the army were apprised of the vicinity of the enemy, and the certainty of an approaching battle. The gorgeous emblem of war was never displayed, except to announce a positive intention to fight: it was formed of red satin, bearing a dragon embroidered in gold, having sapphire eyes, and the tongue ingeniously contrived to seem continually moving. In an encampment, this ensign was placed near the royal tent, on the right of the other standards. It was intended to be expressive of destruction to the enemy, and of safety to the weary and wounded among the English.

The immense multitude of Welsh, collected by Edward, were dispersed among the different divisions of the forces, as being better acquainted with mountain warfare. Being mostly archers, and clothed with white tunics, they were easily distinguished from the other troops.

Tradition asserts, that this grand army took a whole day to deploy through the town of Linlithgow. This, perhaps, may be true, respecting the parties escorting the heavy war-engines, suttlers attending the camp, and other stragglers; but the advanced guard of the English had no sooner passed through, than, on looking up to a rising ground, at some distance in their front, observed the ridge of the hill completely lined with lances. Intimation was given to Edward, and not a moment was lost. Their columns marched up the hill, but, on reaching the summit, the enemy had again disappeared.

As the sun had not yet risen, and the mists of night still hung densely over the neighbouring eminences, the king on gaining the height, commanded his tents to be pitched, and it being the feast of St. Magdalen, ordered

the Bishop of Durham to perform the mass for that day. These lances that the English observed had been the advanced guard of the enemy, for during the sacred service the sun rose, and as the curtain of mist was withdrawn, its rays glanced upon the steel phalanx of the Scots, drawn up on the side of a small hill, where they were busily engaged in arranging their lines and preparing for battle.

The Scottish army did not amount to the third part of the force of the English—their numbers not exceeding thirty thousand; and Wallace, who dreaded this great disparity, and knew how much Edward was likely to suffer by the protraction of the war, and the want of provisions, ~~at first~~ thought of a retreat, and hastened to lead off his soldiers; but he soon found that the English were too near to admit of this being accomplished without certain destruction; and he therefore proceeded to draw up his army, so as to avail himself of the nature of the ground, and to sustain the attack of the English. Between the two armies lay a pretty extensive valley, the bottom of which was covered by a marsh; and the armies were already so near, that the Scottish leaders were observed marshalling their host, and Edward had full leisure to examine the disposition adopted by Wallace. The main force of this intrepid leader lay in his infantry, who were lightly armed, and fought with long spears, besides short daggers and battle axes, which were used in close battle, and slung at the girdle. Upon these troops, which had been trained by Wallace, under own his eye in almost daily war, he had full dependence; and the mode in which he arranged them was remarkable. They were divided into four circular masses, called in the language of the period, *schiltrons*—a disposition which we find to have been used by Harold, king of England, in the battle of Stamford Bridge, and which was admirably calculated to resist the shock of heavy cavalry. “In these circles,” says an ancient contemporary historian, “stood the spearmen with their spears turned outward so as to present a serried front to the enemy on every side, to break which was extremely difficult. Between circle and circle, the intermediate space was occupied by the Scottish archers; and in the rear was drawn up their cavalry, consisting of about a thousand heavy armed horse, in which were John Comyn of Badenoch, and most of the nobles who had

joined Wallace. The archers, chiefly yeomen from the forests of Ettrick and Selkirk, were commanded by Sir John Stuart of Bonkill, brother to the High Steward.

After hearing mass, the king of England being informed of the Scottish disposition of battle, which appeared to him so skilful that he hesitated to lead his army forward to the attack, and proposed that they should pitch their tents, and allow the soldiers and the horses time for refreshment. This was opposed by his officers as being unsafe, there being nothing but a small rivulet between the two armies. "What then would you advise?" asked the king. "An immediate advance," was the reply: "the field and the victory will be ours."—"On them, then," replied the king, "I oppose not your wishes, and may the Holy Trinity be our help!" The Earl Marshal of England accordingly, along with the Earls of Lincoln and Hereford, to whom the leading of the first division was intrusted, instantly advanced against the enemy. They were not aware, however, of the extensive morass which stretched along the front of the Scottish position, and in reaching it, were obliged to make a considerable circuit to the west, to get rid of the obstacle. This retarded their attack. In the meantime the second division, under the command of the Bishop of Durham, which presented a glorious and warlike appearance, advanced. Thirty-six banners or standards belonging to his own principality, and the pennons of a hundred and forty knights, who formed his ordinary personal suite, floated over the forest of spears, and glanced gorgeously in the sun. Anthony Beck, however, who had been trained to war, was aware of the nature of the ground, and as he advanced in firm array, declined his columns obliquely to the east, so as to avoid the marsh. Knowing the danger of too precipitate an attack, he commanded his men to hold back, till the third line under the king came up to support them. In this he was opposed by Ralph Basset of Drayton, who bade him to stick to his mass. "It becomes not a churchman," said the blunt soldier, "to teach the barons of England their lessons in the field; employ thyself, lord bishop, in thine own calling."—"On then," said Beck, "set on in your own way; we are all soldiers to-day, and bound to do our duty, and say the mass, with swords in our hands." So saying, they hastened forward, and in a few minutes

engaged with the first column of the Scottish infantry, whilst the first division having turned the marsh, attacked the second circle, and the king himself advancing with the third division, the battle became general. Wallace's anxiety to avoid a battle, had, in all probability, arisen from his having little dependence on the fidelity of the heavy-armed cavalry, commanded by those nobles who hated and feared him; and the event showed how just were his suspicions; for at this moment, when their services in charging the English archers might have been of the greatest assistance, the whole body of the Scottish horse shamelessly rode off the field, without a blow being given or taken," and Wallace and his infantry were left alone. The baseness of this desertion seems to have excited even the indignation of the enemy, who branded them as false cowards, to fly at the simple sight of the banner of England.

Wallace, however, who did not appear as if the desertion of the cavalry was altogether unexpected, encouraged his soldiers, reminding them that the honour and liberty of their country depended upon them and their exertions; and assuming, as he was often wont in battle, a tone of pleasantry, bade them dance, as well as they were able, for he had done his part in bringing them to the ring. The great superiority of the English cavalry now appeared in their attack upon the Scottish bowmen, who occupied the space between the circles, and who, in point of strength and stature, are commemorated by the historians of both countries, as the flower of the Scottish army. It was almost impossible that, with their inferior numbers, light armour, and exposed situation, they should repel the charge of seven thousand horse, composed of the bravest and best troops in the world: yet none of these foresters of Ettrick or Selkirk quitted the field; all were slain fighting on the ground where they first stood, bravely defending themselves with their short daggers, against the steel-clothed chivalry of England and Gascony, and extorting the unfeigned admiration of their opponents by their uncommon gallantry, and the strength and beauty of their persons. Amongst these bowmen were slain Sir John Stewart of Bonkill, and about twenty other knights who commanded them, nor does it appear that of the archers themselves, a single

man escaped. Still, however, the four circles of the Scottish spearmen, remained unbroken, "Standing up," to use the picturesque expression of an old English historian, "as strong as a castle walled with stone, with their spears point over point, so thick and close together that it was fearful to behold; and the array seemed so so impenetrable, that it was commonly said no living men could pierce through them, though you mustered the bravest in England, from Berwick to Kent." Nor is it at all improbable, that had Wallace been attacked solely by horse, the form into which he had thrown his men, might have rendered an attack entirely abortive. But Edward now brought up his reserve of archers and slingers, who showered their arrows upon them, ~~with~~ volleys of large round stones, which covered the ground where they stood, and slew and wounded multitudes of the Scottish spearmen, whose light armour was ill-fitted to resist the strength of the English bow. Against this dreadful weapon of attack there was no defence; the circles offered a fair and certain mark to the enemy, whilst they themselves were far beyond the reach of the Scottish spear, and Wallace's own bowmen had been cut to pieces by the cavalry. As the columns of the English archers slowly advanced, their showers of arrows, discharged from a lesser distance, and with a more level aim, became more deadly and intolerable. It was now, when he saw his friends and soldiers falling thickly around him, that Wallace felt, with the deepest indignation and anguish, the treachery of Comyn and the other nobles. They, by one vigorous charge upon the English archers, might have restored the day. Sixteen years after this, at the battle of Bannockburn, a body of five hundred horse broke and routed a more numerous body of English archers, and a thousand heavy-armed horse could have found little difficulty in performing the same manœuvre at Falkirk; but the Scottish horse had disgracefully fled, as we have already seen, upon the appearance of the English standard; and the fatal phalanxes of the bowmen, coming nearer and nearer, made such havoc in Wallace's *schiltrons*, that the whole of the first or exterior rank were struck down and slain. The English cavalry, pouring in at the gaps thus made, threw all into confusion, and carried indiscriminate slaughter through their ranks. Macduff, along with his vassals from Fife, was slain, and

with him fell Sir John Graham of Dundaff, a leader of tried courage and experience, who was much beloved and deeply lamented by Wallace. It was now evident that the battle was completely lost, and our hero now saw that retreat was the only expedient left, by which he could save the relics of his army from entire destruction. The Scottish leader accordingly exerted himself to keep together the broken remains of his circles, and retiring slowly upon Calendar wood, was able to defend his rear, till he gained that extensive forest, into which the English did not think it prudent to follow him. Sir Brian de Jaye, however, Master of the Scottish Templars, disdained such caution, and paid for it by his life; for, becoming swamped in a miry ford in Calendar wood, the weight of his barbed horse and steel armour, rendered it impossible for him to extricate himself, and Wallace's men, turning round, "Slew him," says Langtoft, "in a wood called Kalenters." He was the only man of note who fell that day on the English side. Indeed, from the circumstances under which the battle was fought, it is evident that the loss on the part of Edward must have been very trifling. That of Wallace, on the contrary, was very great, and may be estimated, at the lowest computation, to have amounted to fifteen thousand men.

Respecting the battle of Falkirk, there appears a diversity of opinion among the English and Scottish historians. For the following remarks we are indebted to an acute modern author, who appears calmly to have investigated the subject. "According to the Scottish authors, the envy of the nobles towards Wallace, and the dissensions incident thereto, were the chief, if not the sole, occasion of the disaster. The Scottish army, say they, consisted of three divisions of ten thousand men each, under the command of Sir John Comyn, Lord of Badenoch, chief of the powerful clan of that name; Sir John Stewart, brother to the Lord of Bute, who, in addition to his own tenantry, headed those of his absent brother; and Sir William Wallace—three of the most powerful men in the country, the two former from their birth and influence, the latter from the great fame acquired by his military achievements. On the brink of the engagement, an imprudent and unfortunate disagreement arose among the leaders. Stewart insisted upon taking command of the army, being, as he conceived, entitled to that honour, as the represen-

tative of his brother, who was Lord High Steward of Scotland; Comyn claiming it in his own right, on account of high birth, and near relationship to the crown; and Wallace, as Governor of the kingdom, refused to admit the pretensions of either to a command, which he, as representative of their absent sovereign, conceived himself every way entitled to, even though he had not earned that honour by former services. Stewart, in the heat of the altercation, is said to have upbraided Wallace with the lowness of his birth, and charged him with encroaching on the rights of the nobility, which reminded him, he said, of the owl in the fable, who, having borrowed a feather from one bird, and a feather from another, became vain of his plumage, and endeavoured to lord it over his betters. The application is not difficult, he continued; for, if every nobleman in Scotland were to claim his part of those vassals which now follow your banner, your own personal retainers would make but a sorry appearance in support of your high-flown pretensions. Wallace heard, with stern composure, those ill-timed remarks of the haughty chieftain. "I am not ignorant," said he, "of the source whence this insulting language has proceeded; and since you, my lord, condescended to utter their sentiments, you may be also induced to imitate their example; and even this, (glancing a look of indignation at Comyn,) I am not altogether unprepared for. Your fable of the owl is not quite applicable; for I have always showed myself in the face of day, asserting the liberty and independence of my country, while some others, like owls, courted concealment, and were too much afraid of losing their *roosts* to leave them for such a cause. As to my followers, I wish no man to follow me who is not sound at the heart in the cause of his country; and either at the head or in the ranks of these, I will always consider it my glory to be found. In the meantime, till it appear who are entitled to that character, I will make no alteration in my position." Having thus spoken, he removed those under his command to a strong position on the face of a hill immediately behind.

Edward, as if aware of the feud that thus existed in the Scottish camp, and though suffering from the effects of his late accident, ordered the Earl of Hereford, Constable of England, to advance with a body of thirty thousand men to attack the division under Comyn; who,

on seeing them approach, turned his banners, and marched off the field, leaving Stewart and Brandanes (as the inhabitants of Bute were then called), and the archers of Selkirk, his immediate vassals, exposed to all the fury of the charge. They sustained it with the firmest resolution; but, the great mass of the assailants against whom they were engaged, left them little chance of success. Stewart, in the early part of the battle, while giving orders to a body of archers, was thrown from his horse and slain. His followers, however, far from being discouraged by the loss of their chief, continued the conflict with the greatest bravery. Macduff, with a great part of his retainers, were cut off, in their endeavours to retrieve the fortunes of the day, yet numbers forced their way through the ranks of the English and joined the division under Wallace. This was observed by Edward, who, impatient at the resistance he had already met with, ordered Robert Bruce and the Bishop of Durham to advance with the forces under their command. While Wallace was engaged in securing the retreat of his unfortunate countrymen, Bruce made a circuit round the hill, which he occupied, and, regaining the ascent, obliged him to quit his position, and endeavour to force his way through the enemy beneath. The charge of this fresh body of Scots, composed of the stoutest and best disciplined warriors in the country, was but ill-sustained by the division they attacked, which, giving way before their impetuous descent, was thrown into confusion; and Wallace, availing himself of their disorder, directed his troops to cross the Carron, and occupy a post which commanded the ford. In the meantime, with a small but choice body of his friends, he kept in the rear, and continued to charge and repulse those that were most forward in the pursuit. In one of these efforts Wallace advanced alone from the midst of his little band, and, with a single blow, killed Sir Brian le Jay, a knight templar, of high military renown, who had shown himself most active in harassing the retreating Scots. This action rendered the others more cautious in their approaches. Sir John Graham, however, giving way to a gallant but imprudent ardour, advanced too far amongst the enemy, where he was surrounded and slain; and Wallace, after repeated endeavours to revenge the death of his friend, rejoined his followers. This he effected with great diffi-

culty, from the influx of the tide, and the weakness of his horse, which is said to have been so worn out with the fatigues of the day, and the wounds it had received, that the noble animal expired as soon as it had placed its master beyond the reach of his pursuers. By the attention of his trusty follower, Curle, who stood an anxious spectator of the danger of his chief, Wallace was furnished with a fresh horse; and the two friends, as they moved slowly along the banks of the river, were gazing with silent and sorrowful interest on the scene of carnage they had left, when Bruce, from the opposite bank, having recognised the Governor, raised his voice, and requested an interview. This was readily granted; and the warriors approached each other from the opposite side of the river, at a place narrow, deep, and rocky. When on the margin of the stream, Wallace waved his hand to repress the curiosity of his followers, while he eyed his misled countryman with stern, but dignified composure. Bruce felt awed by the majestic deportment and appearance of the patriot, and his voice, though loud, became tremulous as he thus addressed him.—“I am surprised, Sir William, that you should entertain thoughts, as it is believed you do, of attaining to the crown of Scotland; and that, with this chimerical object in view, you should thus continue to expose yourself to so many dangers. It is not easy, you find, to resist the King of England, who is one of the greatest princes in the world; and were you even successful in your attempts, are you so vain as to imagine that the Scots will ever suffer you to be their king?” The Governor did not allow him to say more, but replied—“No, my thoughts never soared so high; nor do I intend to usurp a throne I very well know my birth can give me no title to, and my services can never merit. I only mean to deliver my country from oppression and slavery, and to support a just cause, which you have abandoned. You, my lord, whose right may entitle you to be king, ought to protect the kingdom; it is because you do it not that I must, and will, while I breathe, endeavour the defence of that country I was born to serve, and for which, if Providence will have it so, to die: as for you, who, in place of exerting your talents to turn the tide of battle in your country’s favour, choose rather to live a slave, if with safety to your life and fortune, than free, with the hazard of losing the latter. You may remain in

possession of what you so much value, while the hollow praises of our enemies may blind you to the enormity of your conduct: but remember, my lord, they whom you are thus aiding to bind the yoke of slavery on the necks of your countrymen, will not long consider that conduct praiseworthy in you, which they would condemn as infamous in themselves; and if they are successful in riveting our chains, you will find your reward in the well-earned contempt of the oppressor, and the hearty execrations of the oppressed. Pause, therefore, and reflect; if you have but the heart to claim the crown, you may win it with glory, and wear it with justice. I can do neither; but what I can, I will—live and die a freeman." These generous sentiments, uttered in a clear, manly, and determined tone of voice, came home to the heart of Bruce, with all the sternness of deserved reproof; and he was about to reply, when the ringing of harness, followed by the appearance of a number of helmets, overtopped the ridge of a neighbouring hillock, and made it prudent to break off the conference.

Such are the particulars of this memorable battle, as related, with some trifling variations, by most, if not by all, our old Scottish historians. As modern commentators, however, consider themselves justified in denying some of the material points—particularly the feud among the leaders, the presence of Bruce in the engagement, and, consequently, his conference with Wallace—we shall, in this place, devote a few pages to their consideration.

These objections are chiefly founded on the authority of Hemingford and Trevit, two English monks, who are said to have had their information from eye-witnesses.—This may be all true; but when we find one of them (Hemingford) asserting that *fifty thousand Scots were slain in the battle, many drowned, three thousand foot taken prisoners, besides a thousand horse,*" we may reasonably suppose the possibility of the *eye-witnesses* being so much occupied in counting their killed and captured enemies, that matters of such comparatively trifling importance may not have had the requisite share of their attention.—Lord Hailes, however, lends the weight of his highly respectable name, in support of those who deny the truth of this portion of our national annals, and thus expresses himself on the point in question:—"It would be tedious and unprofitable to recite all that has been said on this

subject by our own writers, from Fordun to Abercrombie, how Wallace, Stewart, and Comyn quarrelled on the punctilio of leading the van of an army which stood on the defensive; how Stewart compared Wallace to an owl, with borrowed feathers; how the Scottish leaders, busied in this frivolous altercation, had no leisure to form their array; how Comyn traitorously withdrew with ten thousand men; how Wallace, from resentment, followed his example; how, by such disastrous incidents, the Scottish army was enfeebled, and Stewart and his party abandoned to destruction. Our histories abound in trash of this kind. There is scarcely one of our writers who has not produced an invective against Comyn, or an apology for Wallace, or a lamentation for the deserted Stewart. What dissensions may have prevailed among the Scottish commanders it is impossible to know. It appears not to me that their dissensions had any influence on their conduct in the day of battle. The truth seems to be this:—The English cavalry exceeded the Scotch in numbers—were infinitely better equipped, and more adroit. The Scottish cavalry were intimidated and fled:—had they remained in the field, they might have preserved their honour, but never could have turned the chance of that day. It was natural, however, for such of their party as survived the engagement, to impute the disaster to the defection of the cavalry:—national pride would ascribe their flight to treachery, rather than to pusillanimity. It is not improbable that Comyn may have commanded the cavalry; hence, a report may have spread, that Comyn had betrayed his country: the report has been embellished by each successive relation.—When men are seized with a panic, their commander *must*, of necessity, or *will*, from prudence, accompany them in their flight. Earl Warrene fled with his army from Stirling to Berwick, yet Edward did not punish him as a traitor or a coward.

The tale of Comyn's treachery, and Wallace's ill-timed resentment, may have gained credit, because it is a pretty tale, and not improbable in itself; but it always amazes me that the story of the *congress* of Bruce and Wallace, after the battle of Falkirk, should have gained credit. I lay aside the full evidence which we now possess, that Bruce was not at that time of the English party, nor present at the battle—for it must be admitted, that our his-

torians knew nothing of those circumstances, which demonstrate the impossibility of the *congress*—but the wonder is, that men of sound judgment should not have seen the absurdity of a long conversation, between the commander of a flying army, and one of the leaders of a victorious army. When Fordun told the story, he placed *a narrow but inaccessible glen* between the speakers. Later historians have substituted the river Carron in place of an inaccessible glen; and they make Bruce and Wallace talk, across the river, like two young declaimers from the pulpits in a school of rhetoric ”

With all due deference to his lordship, we conceive that the strength of his first objection lies chiefly in adhering literally to the words *leading the van*, made use of by some of our old writers; others who mention the quarrel, do not so express themselves. Now, we do not see anything so improbable in a discussion arising among these chiefs, who considered themselves as independent of each other, about who should have the supreme command in directing the operations of the day, which, we presume, is all that is to be understood in this instance, by *leading the van*. The obvious advantage of having a commander-in-chief, in so momentous an occasion, could not have escaped the merest tyro in military tactics; and that no person was appointed to this office, even his lordship does not deny. That Wallace, from past services, as well as from being Guardian of the kingdom, had reason to consider himself entitled to this distinction cannot be disputed; and it is not likely, from the talents and foresight he had displayed on former occasions, that he would have come to the field against so powerful and so experienced an adversary, without having previously formed some plan for conducting the operations of the day, so as to counteract the great superiority of force, which the English monarch had brought into the field. The thwarting of his plans, by the envy and hateur of his colleagues, affords a plain and obvious solution of his conduct; and his resignation of his Guardianship after the battle (which his lordship does not deny), very strongly corroborates the account given by our Scottish historians, of the treatment which he received on the field; and this treatment must have been attended with circumstances which convinced him of the utter hopelessness of his being able to direct the resources of the country to advantage. Strong indeed

must have been the reasons which induced this brave, intrepid, and prudent pilot, to relinquish the helm of affairs at so critical a juncture. That an unfortunate animosity existed, we have the most ample testimony; and though his lordship conceives it to have been so very trifling in its nature, as not to influence the parties in the discharge of their duties, yet we have respectable and incontrovertible evidence, that it not only did so, but was the principal, if not the sole cause, of the disasters which overwhelmed the country. Wynton thus expresses himself on the occasion:—

“For dyspyt and gret inwy
The Comyns Kyn all halyby
Fyrst left the Feld; and, as behowy’d,
Syne Willame Walayis hym remowyd;
For he persawyd gret malys
Agayne hym scharpyd mony wys.”

And again,

“Before than couth na man say,
Na nevyr wes sene befor that day,
Sa hale weneust the Scottis men:
Na it had noucht fullyn then,
Had noucht Falshed and Inwy
Devysyd theme sa’ syudry ly.”

“Here there is no natural pride interfering, to conceal the extent of the discomfiture of the Scots; and it is surprising his lordship should conceive, that any one would think it necessary to invent what he calls a *pretty tale* for the purpose of soothing the national feelings. Thirty thousand Scots, we presume, may be defeated by ninety or a hundred thousand English, without being *very* much disgraced by the affair; whereas the English authorities may have been silent on circumstances which tended to diminish the glory of their victory, even had they come to their knowledge.

“That Comyn commanded the cavalry, is merely a conjecture of his lordship; but allowing it to have been the case, we conceive there is a material difference between a leader joining in the general flight of his army, and one riding off with part of his forces, and leaving the rest to stand the brunt of the engagement. If Warenne had acted so, we presume he would either have been punished

as a traitor, or cashiered as a coward. That Comyn was afterwards elected one of the regents of the kingdom, affords no satisfactory evidence of his having acted correctly. He was at the head of the only entire body of troops in the country, and his faction unbroken—of course, there would be no opposition to his election. And the wonder is, considering the ambition of the man, that, under these circumstances, he was not appointed sole regent, in place of sharing a divided authority (as will be seen in the sequel) with one who was his inferior in birth, talents, and influence.

“ We cannot see any great improbability of the *congress* (as his lordship calls it) having taken place in the manner described, *provided that Bruce was present*. Wallace had already secured his troops from immediate pursuit. Bruce might think it a favourable opportunity to palliate his conduct at Irvine; and Wallace, who was seldom afraid to come in juxta-position with any one, might have been easily induced to stand when he hailed him. His lordship’s objection is founded chiefly on the length of the conversation. Now, if any one will peruse it, even in the most verbose of our historians, he will find that it could not have occupied more than five minutes, which certainly cannot be called a ‘long conversation,’ or, at least, so long as to afford anything like a plausible objection to its occurrence. As to Fordun having placed *a narrow inaccessible glen* between the parties, it does not in the least affect the credibility of the account. Few glens are to be found in Scotland, without a river or stream of some description running through them; and, in speaking of any of these, it is no uncommon thing for one person to allude to the glen, and another to the river or stream so connected with it.

“ That all our ancient authors should agree in the circumstance of Bruce being present at the battle is very singular, provided he was not there. How they should all be in this state of ignorance is rather unaccountable, considering the facility they had of informing themselves, as some of them must have written from authority, if not of eye-witnesses, at least of those who derived their accounts from such. It is not at all probable, that Bruce, who is universally acknowledged to have been a monarch of great political sagacity, would have allowed a tale, so likely to injure him in the opinion of his subjects, to get

into general circulation ; while the contrary statement, if true, would have tended to exalt him in their estimation. There appears so many irreconcilable circumstances involved in the belief of this opinion, that we feel much inclined to suspect some little discrepancy in the evidence to which his lordship so confidently alludes, more particularly as Wyntown, whose authority is highly appreciated by all writers, is so very pointed in asserting the presence of Bruce in the English army. The words are :

“ Bot yhit the lele Scottis men,
 That in that feld ware feychtand then,
 To-gydder stwd sa fermly
 Stry kand before thame manlykly,
 Swa that nane thare thyrl thame mycht,
 Bot Robert the Brows than with a slycht
 (He thare wes wyth this King Edwart,
 Set he oure Kyng wes efterwart,)
 Wyth Schyre Anton the Bek a wylyman,
 Of Durame Byschape he wes than
 Abowt ane hill a well fere way
 Owt of that stowre than prikyst thay ;
 Bchynd bakkis alsa fast
 Thare thai come on, and layd on fast ;
 ● Swa made thai the dyscumfytowre.”

Here our author, not satisfied with stating that ‘Robert the Brows’ was with ‘King Edwart,’ but, in order to establish the identity of the person, and guard against his being confounded with the elder Bruce, or any other of the same name, he expressly says :

‘ Set he oure kyng wes efterwart.’

“ If Bruce was at this time on the side of the patriots as his lordship says, it is singular that he did not appear among them on this eventful day, in a manner becoming his birth, talents, and great territorial influence. When all the chiefs of the party had collected their followers for a grand national struggle, Bruce is represented as employed in guarding, what his lordship, for the sake of effect, calls the ‘important castle of Ayre,’ which it seems, in those days, ‘*kept the communication open with Galloway, Argylshire, and the Isles.*’ Had the possession of this ‘important castle’ been of any use to an army stationed between Linlithgow and Falkirk, it certainly

could have been defended by a person of less consequence than Bruce, whose military talents and numerous vassals would have been of infinitely greater service in the field. When Wallace was straining every nerve to collect the strength of the country, to oppose the formidable invaders, and with his utmost efforts could not muster more than 30,000 soldiers, can it be supposed, that he would have failed to summon to the standard of liberty a baron of such influence as the Earl of Carrick, if he thought there were a chance of the summons being obeyed.

“ Though his lordship asserts that Bruce had deserted the cause of Edward, yet he does not attempt to show that any communication took place between him and the Scottish army; nor by what authority he assumed the defence of the castle of Ayr, which was a fortress at that time belonging to the crown. If Hemingford, on whose authority his lordship chiefly relies, could have gone so egregiously astray from everything like probability in the account he gives of the casualties of the battle, we may, without injustice, receive his testimony on this, or on any other subject, without suspicion; particularly when it goes to contradict historians, of acknowledged veracity, who had opportunities of being at least equally well informed on the subject as himself. It has been advanced by the learned annalist, in evidence of the truth of Hemingford's statement, that lands and castles belonging to Bruce were plundered and taken by the English army. By a parity of reasoning, if these lands and castles had been exempt from the general outrage, it would have proved that Bruce was in the interest of England; and the guardians and barons of Scotland would thereby have stood convicted of the unpardonable folly of allowing lands to be occupied, and castles to be held in the very centre of the country, by the open and declared partizan of their enemy. That the title of Bruce to his Scottish estates was in abeyance, and his castles garrisoned for the safety of the commonwealth of Scotland, is the most probable state of the affair. When the half-famished soldiers of Edward, therefore, pillaged the lands, and attacked the castles of Bruce, they did what their king, under such circumstances, neither could nor would restrain, whether his vassal had renounced his allegiance or not. This conduct, on the part of the

English, therefore, can afford no evidence whatever of Bruce being at the time in arms against England.

“These observations the writer has thought it expedient to make, in support of the relation given of the battle of Falkirk, by the ancient historians of Scotland. As the talents, however, which Lord Hailes has displayed in his researches into Scottish history, are held by the public in high, and, in many instances, deserved esteem; and though it is with reluctance that we differ from one whose opinions in general are entitled to credit, yet, as we find him, in this instance, at variance with most of our ancient Scottish authorities, we have thought it our duty to endeavour to lay both sides of the question fairly before the reader, in order that he may be able to form his own opinion of the matter.”

With respect to Bruce, the future king and steadfast defender of his country's independence, at the time of which we write, he was not to be trusted by either party; and as we have already shown, when Wallace was stirring up his countrymen, to oppose the invading army of Edward, he *maintained a suspicious neutrality*. This statement is supported by several historians; and from his conduct immediately after the battle of Falkirk, which will be seen in the next chapter, with all deference to the forementioned writer, we must coincide with Lord Hailes, in this instance, that Bruce, at least, Robert Bruce, the younger, was not engaged on the side of the English at Falkirk, and we can find no authority who states that he was engaged at all in that eventful battle; we must therefore conclude, that Robert Bruce *maintained a suspicious neutrality* on that occasion.

CHAPTER XII.

Wallace retreats after the Battle of Falkirk. The Scots burn Stirling and Perth. Edward is compelled to retreat. Wallace resigns the office of Governor.

AFTER such a signal defeat as Wallace had met with at Falkirk, his retreat from the field of battle may justly be considered as an exquisite master-piece of generalship. The English army had suffered comparatively little in the engagement; and the powerful body of horse, at Edward's disposal, afforded ample means of following up his victory by cutting off the remnant of the Scottish force while in the act of retiring. It is, therefore, truly astonishing, that so large a body of the Scots, though deserted by their own cavalry, should have been allowed to escape in presence of so formidable a force, so well appointed, and commanded by one of the first generals of the age; and it can only be accounted for, by supposing that the intrepid conduct of Wallace was such as awed them from the attempt.

Blind Harry informs us, that after Wallace had seen his followers in a place of safety, he returned to the field, accompanied by a number of his friends and followers, in order to search for the body of Sir John Graham—the English having retired to Linlithgow.

Since the young knight of Dundaff had joined the standard of our hero, they had continued as brothers, and Wallace used to call him his "right hand."—The deep regret which he felt at his death was, no doubt, strengthened by the reflection, that his gallant and accomplished friend might, without dishonour, have absented himself from the battle of Falkirk, on account of the wounds he had so lately received at the skirmish at Blackironside, had it not been for his indefatigable exertions and desire to aid the great cause for which he had so nobly perished. The distress of Wallace, on finding the dead body, is thus feelingly described by the Minstrel:—

" Amang the ded men sekand the worthiast,
 The corss of Graym, for quham he murned maist,
 Quhen thai him fand, and gud Walays him saw,
 He lychtyt down, and hynt him fra thaim aw
 In armis up; behaldand his pail face,
 He kysit him, and cryt full oft, ' Alace !
 My best brothir in warld that euir I had !
 My afald freynd, quhen I was hardest stad !
 My hop, my heill, thow was in maist honour !
 My faith, my help, my strenthiast in stour !
 In the was wyt, freedom and hardinos ;
 In the was treuth, manheid, and nobilness ;
 In the was rewl, in the was gouvernans ;
 In the was wertu with outy warians ;
 In the lawte, in the was gret largnas ;
 In the gentrice, in the was steadfastnas.
 Thow was gret causs off wynnyng off Scotland ;
 Thocht I began, and tuk the wer on hand,
 I wow to God, that has the warld in wauld
 Thi dede sall be to the Southeroun full der sauld.
 Martyr thow art for Seotlandis rycht and me ;
 I sall the wenge, or ellis tharfor de.'
 Was na man thar fra wepyng mycht him refreyn
 For loss of him, quhen thai hard Walays plein.
 Thai caryit him with worschip and dolour
 In the Fawkyrk graithit him in sepultour."

In this monody we have the true portrait of an accomplished warrior and a gentleman—a friend and brother of our hero; and rare and shining virtues, which are thus said to have been united in this illustrious individual, have never been denied or depreciated by the most fastidious of the critics; while our historians bear testimony to the correctness of the character.

Having seen the remains of his associate interred in the churchyard of Falkirk, he rejoined his followers, where he might meditate upon some deed of daring, in order to revenge the death of Graham and so many of his faithful followers. Having called the leaders of his army to a council of war, it was speedily determined to make an attack upon the English camp, while Edward and his army were reposing after their fatigues, unsuspecting of the Scots' after their recent defeat. In accordance with this resolution, he selected a sufficient number of his strongest and most courageous soldiers, to whom he shortly explained his intentions, and exhorting them to firmness in their revenge upon the army for the loss of their companions. They set off on their march, using

every precaution to avoid discovery; but this was unnecessary, and they reached the vicinity of the English camp about midnight, without meeting with any interruption. They instantly broke in upon their drowsy foes; and, after killing a great number, and spreading alarm through the whole army, effected his retreat without losing a single man. Edward was greatly incensed at this daring attack from a foe he considered completely discomfited, and determined upon exterminating these resolute enemies, he ordered a close pursuit; but his nimble adversaries retreated to Stirling, which, being unable to maintain, they set it on fire in several places; and Edward, on entering it, found it reduced to ashes, so that the enemy was again reduced to a state of famine; and the Scots had also wasted and plundered the adjacent country, so that the English could find food for neither man nor beast. The convent of the Dominicans at Stirling, a noble and extensive building of stone, had escaped the flames; and here the king, who still suffered from the stroke of his horse, remained for fifteen days, during which time he was in daily expectations of his long-looked-for fleet, but was doomed to disappointment.

Meanwhile he sent a division of his army across the Forth into Clackmannanshire and Menteith, which, after ravaging the country and plundering the villages, advanced in its destructive progress through Fife, in revenge, no doubt, for the gallant stand the inhabitants of that district had made at Falkirk under Macduff, their late and unfortunate chief. Another division entered St. Andrews, which they found in the same condition as Stirling—deserted by its inhabitants, and reduced to ashes—in the words of Hardyng, it was “clene brent.”

During these incursions of the enemy, the prudent measures of Wallace enabled the Scots more effectually to embarrass the movements of the enemy. While he, with his brave soldiers, continued to surprise the foe, by breaking into their camp when least expected, the other leaders were engaged in preventing supplies from reaching the famishing English; and Edward, at last, became apprehensive of advancing too far into the wild regions of the north; and he now prudently directed his march towards the more fruitful neighbourhood of Perth. But here also his unwearied and restless enemy continued to

assail those parts of the army that appeared most vulnerable; and, at last, by stratagem, having cut off a part from the main body of the English, by breaking down the wooden bridge over the Tay, he cut them to pieces. The English army was still too numerous for the Scots to risk a general engagement; and, as they were not able to retain the town, the patriot burghers of Perth consented to sacrifice it, by burning their houses, and destroying their property with their own hands, rather than that they should afford shelter or support to their invaders.

Edward now felt, to his unspeakable mortification, that unless his supplies arrived within a few days, to maintain his army in the enemy's country was impossible. At the very moment when he had triumphed over his enemy he saw the fruits of his victory about to be wrested from him. The whole extent of Stirlingshire, Menteith, Clackmannan, Fife, and the country as far as Perth, were reduced almost to a desert; and having in vain waited for some intelligence of his fleet, till symptoms of disaffection again began to evince themselves amongst his barons and his starving troops, he found himself compelled to issue orders for a retreat. Calling in, therefore, his scattered divisions, they returned to Stirling, where he left a garrison with promises of speedy supplies; and, with the main force of his army, fell back upon Abercorn, near Queensferry, where he entertained a last hope of receiving intelligence of his ships, or procuring supplies at least from some individual vessels, which he trusted might have been able to beat up the Firth against the contrary winds. In this, however, he was finally disappointed. He then marched to Glasgow, and through the district of Clydesdale, by Bothwell to Lanark, from which he proceeded towards the strong castle of Ayr, then in the hands of the younger Bruce, Earl of Carrick, who, during the last campaign, remained neutral, as already noticed, shutting himself up in his own territories, and refusing to join either the party of Wallace or of Edward. This baron knew the King of England well enough to be aware that he was not of a disposition to excuse such vacillating conduct; and, indeed, the principal object in directing his march upon Ayr seems to have been to waste the territory of Bruce. This powerful baron, therefore, dreading the resentment which he had provoked,

set fire to his castle of Ayr, and retired to the fastnesses of Galloway.

Edward, after a hard struggle against the famine which now grievously afflicted his troops, was compelled to retreat through Annandale to Carlisle. In his progress through Annandale he made himself master of the strong castle of Lochmaben, which, after a short resistance, the garrison yielded upon favourable terms. Thus, were the fruits of the bloody and decisive battle of Falkirk plucked from the hands of Edward, by famine and distress, at the moment he expected to secure them; and after leading against Scotland the most numerous and best appointed army which had perhaps ever invaded it, and defeating his enemies with great slaughter, he was compelled to retreat while still nearly the whole of the country was unsubdued, and even when that part which was wasted, and which he had overrun, was only waiting for his absence to rise into a revolt against him.

Thus we have seen, that, although defeated in a sanguinary battle, Wallace had cause for satisfaction, and the people of Scotland for gratitude, in watching the result of that plan of operations, which they had followed by the advice of their governor. Their devotedness in wasting the country, and sacrificing their individual comforts and personal property to the great cause in which they were engaged, had compelled their relentless enemy to retreat at the very moment when victory seemed to lay the country at his feet, and expose it to indiscriminate subjugation; and he became sensible of that great truth, which, amid their insatiate lust of dominion, and their reckless contempt of human life, ought to be written "with sharp pens and bloody ink" upon the selfish bosom of every conqueror, that superior numerical force may for a time overwhelm or break the spirit of a brave people but that, if animated by a sincere love of liberty and national independence, and ready to sacrifice their lives in the cause, such a people can never be subdued. Edward had also learned that the noble achievements of Wallace had not only become a theme for the troubadours of France, but also the subject of conversation and applause of all the courts of the continent of Europe. To a prince who had not only distinguished himself by his warlike exploits in the Holy Land, but had also, in a tournament held at Calais, baffled and disgraced the most

renowned of the chivalry of France, the plaudits so liberally bestowed upon a rival so far beneath him in rank, was peculiarly mortifying, the more so as he was aware they were deserved, and excited in him the most inveterate hostility toward the nation thus rescued from his thralldom.

Upon arriving at Carlisle, the Earls of Norfolk and Hereford left the English army to return home, under the pretence that their men and horses were worn out with the expedition, but in reality because they were incensed at the king for a breach of faith. Edward, when at Lochmaben, had, without consulting them or their brother nobles, disposed of the island of Arran to Thomas Bisset, a Scottish adventurer, who having invaded and seized it about the time of the battle of Falkirk, pretended that he had undertaken the enterprise for the king of England. This gift was made in complete violation of a solemn promise, that without the advice of his council he would adopt no new measures. He however held a parliament in Carlisle, in which, as a reward for their services in the late campaign, he bestowed upon his barons and chief leaders many of the estates of the Scottish nobility, which he declared forfeited on account of their rebellion. This, however, was rather an extraordinary proceeding; for Edward and his army knew well that at this moment he did not possess a foot of land in Scotland, which with any confidence he could call his own; and the barons to whom these grants were made were perfectly aware that to be available they must win them by the sword. We are not to be surprised then at the expression of Hemingford, a contemporary English historian, that the wide districts, which he now assigned to his earls and barons, were grants in hope, not in possession. But Edward found it was absolutely necessary to allay the discontent which prevailed amongst his nobility; for they complained loudly of having sustained, in the late campaign, the most grievous loss, both in men and horses; they were jealous of the perpetual deceit and evasion with which Edward treated their demands for the corroboration of the great charter, and the charter of the forests; and they began to fear that with so obstinate an enemy as the Scots, the king's wars would be as interminable as his ambition was unbounded.

Edward proceeded from Carlisle to Durham, where he

had not remained many days, before messengers arrived with the intelligence that the Scots were again in arms; upon which, with an ardour and resolution which would have been admirable in a better cause, he marched rapidly back to Tynemouth, and from thence to Coldingham near Beverley. His troops however, were worn out by famine and distress, a great proportion of his barons and knights had already disbanded their vassals and returned to their homes; and to recommence the campaign at this late season, with the exhausted remains of his army, would have been incurring the greatest risk, and leading almost to certain discomfiture. He contented himself, therefore, with issuing writs for the assembling of a new army, to chastise, as he said, the obstinate and reiterated rebellions of the Scots; and he appointed his barons to meet him at Carlisle, with their full feudal strength, on the eve of the day of Pentecost. He also commanded the speedy collection of the money granted by the clergy of the province of York, to assist him in his war with Scotland; and despatched letters to the nobles of England, ordering their attendance in the army destined against Scotland. Amongst the barons thus summoned, we find Patrick Earl of March, and his son Patrick of Dunbar, the Earl of Angus, Gilbert de Umfraville, Alexander de Baliol, and Simon Frazer—all of them Scottish nobles, who had abandoned, in wounded pride or selfish despondency, the party of Wallace, and attached themselves for the time to the service of England.

Edward now returned homewards, in the hope of being soon able to revenge himself upon his enemies for the mortification and distress they had caused him. He was welcomed on his progress to London; for, to have defeated Wallace, a name which had filled England with dismay, was considered by his subjects an achievement deserving of the highest praise. The disasters of the campaign were entirely forgotten, and bands of minstrels issued from the different towns on his route to welcome the conqueror to Falkirk. The citizens of London decreed him a triumphal procession, in honour of his victory, and the various corporations vied with each other in the richness of their banners, and the splendour of their emblematical representations. Stowe thus mentions the affair; and if we may judge of the appearance of other processions by the display made by the fishmongers on

this joyous occasion, the whole must have exhibited a mass of barbaric magnificence not easily to be supposed : —“ The citizens of London, hearing of the great victory obtained by the King of England against the Scots, made great and solemn rejoicings in their city, every one according to their craft, especially the fishmongers, which, with solemn procession, passed through the city, having, amongst other pageants and shows, four sturgeons gilted, carried on four horses; then four salmons of silver, on four horses; and after five-and-forty knights, armed, riding on horses made like luces of the sea; and then Saint Magnus, with a thousand horsemen. This they did on Saint Magnus's day, in honour of the king's great victory and safe return.”

If, however, the result of this last campaign rendered it evident to Edward, that much was still to be achieved before he could call Scotland his own, the lesson which it afforded to Wallace was equally mortifying and decisive: it convinced him that the prejudices of the Scottish nobility against his elevation to the supreme power in the state were insuperable. It was a dignity which, if we are to believe an ancient historian, he did not himself desire. He found it impossible, with any chance of success, to lead an army against the King of England, of which the greater part of the leaders were ready to desert him, upon the slightest cause of dissatisfaction, or to betray him, on the first favourable opportunity, into the hands of the enemy. The feudal fetters of that system which bound the armed vassals and free tenantry to follow the banner of their lord, on whatever side it was to be found, he discovered to be too strong for even his iron hand to break or wrench asunder; and the selfish principles which had hitherto animated a great part of the Scottish barons, leading them to sell the liberty of their country for the security of their own estates, were, as it appeared to him, too deeply rooted in their constitution, to be opposed with any ultimate hope of success. To these causes of despondency were added serious fears for his own safety. A strong faction of the nobles had been formed against him, who were not content with opposing his measures for the public safety, but, animated by the keenest feelings of personal injuries, determined to complete his ruin.— There can be little doubt, from all that we know of the character of Wallace, that, during his exertions for the

expulsion of the English from Scotland, he had used the high authority committed to him with stern and unbending severity; that he had insulted the pride, and despised the remonstrances, and not unfrequently inflicted punishment and imprisonment, upon the persons of the higher barons; and the defeat at Falkirk, the assumption of the office of commander-in-chief, and the alleged abuses of which he had been accused, now gave his enemies a handle against him, which he knew they would not be slow to use. Comyn and the partisans of Stewart were loud in their expressions of disapprobation against him. The latter charged him openly with the loss of the battle, by his refusing to lend any assistance to Stewart, their late chief, till it was too late; and Comyn, conscious of his own misconduct, in order to supply something like a pretext for having deserted his countrymen in the time of need, accused Wallace with an intention of usurping the sovereign authority; and even Robert Bruce forgot his personal animosity to Comyn, and united with his rival to put the governor down; declaring, "that it was more honourable for men of birth to serve a great and powerful monarch, though a foreigner, than subject themselves to the tyranny of an upstart of yesterday." It was therefore generally asserted that a resolution had been taken by the nobility to bring him to trial for high treason, on the ground of his having usurped the chief authority in the kingdom, and disposed of the persons and property of the subjects, without the consent of the Estates; and he was well aware that his great popularity with the body of the nation would avail him little, if the nobles were to be his judges. Influenced by such motives, he embraced the resolution of voluntarily resigning a dignity, which he could no longer retain with advantage to the country, or with safety to himself, and return to the station of a private knight; and, not long after the battle of Falkirk, having assembled his friends, and invited the nobles to a conference at the Water of Forth, he solemnly resigned the office of governor, declaring that he would rather give up the management of the state to whoever chose to assume it, than remain at perpetual variance with the nobility, and thus occasion the destruction of the faithful commons of his country.—Wynton thus makes mention of his resignation;—

"For better he had to lyve simply,
 Na undyr sic dowl in senyhowry ;
 Na the lele comownys of Scotland
 He wald nocht had peryst undyr his hand.
 He rather chose to spend his life
 In simple state, than gage in strife
 With lordly power and barons might,
 Who held him long in high despite ;
 And caused his brave and faithful band
 Of the true commons of the land,
 To perish underneath his hand."

There is one reflection upon this demission of the supreme power by Wallace which necessarily arises in the mind. Our hero had now possessed the highest authority in the state for two years. After the battle of Stirling, at the time of his great invasion of England, and previous to the battle of Falkirk, he was at the head of an army, which, had he been personally ambitious, and willing, by the destruction of the ancient nobility, who had given him ample provocation, to have raised himself into perpetual power, would have enabled him either to effect his object, or, at least, to engage in the struggle with every prospect of success. That he was idolized by the people is certain: he was not only the bravest, but undoubtedly the ablest, military leader in Scotland: he saw the country deserted and betrayed by her nobility: the legitimate sovereign a captive, and unable, if he had been free, to defend his kingdom: whilst the hereditary aspirants to the crown had united themselves to England. Under such circumstances, if ever the personal ambition of a throne could be pronounced a noble infirmity, if ever there was a concurrence of events which could justify a subject in permitting his army to place upon his head a crown to which he had no hereditary claim, it was the crisis in which Scotland was placed in 1297. But Wallace resisted, or rather, his upright and patriotic spirit did not feel, the temptation. There is no evidence to show that his great services were rewarded even by the common grant of an estate, or that he ever followed the uniform practice of the times, by appropriating to his followers or to himself the ample territories which the repeated treasons of their proprietors legitimately placed at his disposal; and he returned into the ranks of private life, the moment that he discovered his elevation was not attended with any benefit to his

country,—with no other possessions or honours than those which distinguished him when he left them; his rank, as a knight; and his unconquerable resolution never to submit to a foreign power: true, for his reward he had obtained the hatred of the nobility, and the gratitude and adoration of the commons—the first of these he despised, while he respected the other.

Upon the retirement of Wallace from the governorship of the kingdom, the body of the Scottish nobles who still determined to continue the struggle against the domination of England, proceeded to the appointment of a regency. John Comyn, Lord of Badenoch, and John de Soulis, were elected governors of Scotland; and after some time Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, and William Lamberton, Bishop of St. Andrews were associated in the command. The Earl of Carrick was then a young man in his twenty-fifth year, and this attempt to reconcile the discordant elements of the two parties, was in all probability suggested by Lamberton; but the coalition was unnatural, and soon fell to pieces; as within two years Bruce had made his peace with Edward; and in several engagements which took place previous to the final subjugation of Scotland, he continued faithful to the English party, and rose rapidly in the confidence of Edward. It has been truly remarked by Lord Hailes, that Bruce, acting as a brother guardian with Comyn, in the name of Baliol, is a historical problem of difficult solution. Although the new regents of Scotland appear to have been sincere in their opposition to England, it was evident that the renunciation of Wallace had a fatal and paralysing effect upon the people;—his being compelled to give up the dignity of governor amounted almost to an acknowledgment that he considered the cause as hopeless; although they were aware that the talents, prowess, and patriotism of their late governor, would act as a check in restraining the regency from sacrificing the interest of the country to their own aggrandizement.

CHAPTER XIII.

Conduct of Wallace after his demission. Various exploits. Baliol de-Pope. Negotiations thereanent. Edward again invades Scotland. Siege of Caerlaverock. Occurrences during the siege.

IMMEDIATELY after the demission of Wallace, a perplexing obscurity involves his history. The evidence of contemporary chronicles, and the light to be derived from authentic muniments are alike lost and extinguished; and till we arrive at his death in 1305, the interval, which embraces the period of seven years, can only be filled up from the records of ancient historians. One of the earliest Scottish Chronicles, whose honest narrative betrays little disposition to indulge, like some of his later brethren in the romance of history, thus concludes the brief account which he has given of his public life. "I have heard it stated," says he, "that relations of his worthy and courageous exploits have been drawn up at great length; and yet, I believe, that many though these narratives be, they do not embrace all the deeds that he wrought in his day—and indeed, he who would undertake to recount all his 'deeds of price,' would find himself engaged in the composition of a very large work; as for myself, I have neither leisure nor genius enough to include them in this chronicle. That the worthy Prior of Lochleven, did not find leisure to interweave into the homely but veracious body of his chronicle some of those noble 'deeds of price,' which, upon *his* authority, we may be certain, were performed by Wallace, must be matter of deep regret to every one, who is interested in the history of the liberty of an ancient people. Wynton lived at a period when it would have been comparatively easy to ascertain their authenticity, to have stript them of the brilliant colours, in which they were invested by the credulity of his countrymen, and to have transmitted them in their heroic simplicity to posterity. Guided by such an author, we should then have been able to acquaint ourselves with the history of this remarkable man, after his

voluntary resignation of the supreme power; we might have followed his career, when he relapsed into the condition of a private baron, and continued (according to the assertion of Fordun,) to give the benefit of his experience and advice to the very men, whose jealousy had compelled him to the demission of his high office; or we might have travelled with him to the court of France, where he is stated, by Fordun, to have risen into high favour with the French monarch, and to have increased his character for personal prowess by his success against the pirates, who then infested the seas, and were the terror of the merchants of Europe. Since Wynton could not find leisure to enlighten the world on these circumstances of the life of Wallace after his resignation, we must have recourse to those contemporary historians who have thought proper to do so.

The judicious orders issued by Wallace, previous to the late invasion of the English, for carrying off their cattle and other stores, to places of security, contributed not only to their safety, but also to the disappointment and distress of the enemy. On the retreat, therefore, of the immense army of Edward, the inhabitants were far from being that wretched and dispirited race which they had appeared after the siege of Berwick and the battle of Dunbar. Several of the chieftains, it is true, had reneged their oaths of fidelity to Edward, but the defection from the glorious cause of liberty was by no means general. The principal places of strength, with the exception of the castles of Stirling and Lochmaben, were in the hands of the Scots; and the impregnable fortress of Dumbarton had been given, by Wallace, in charge to Sir John Stewart, of Husky, better known by the name of Monteith, as a reward for his services in the cause of his country. This individual had been present with Wallace in many situations of danger and difficulty, in which he generally conducted himself as a brave patriot. According to the Minstrel, when the governor bestowed the guardianship of Dumbarton upon Monteith, he had stipulated for the erection of a small house for himself within the fortress, in the building of which considerable progress had been made when the English army entered Scotland. Some authors allege, that the reason which induced Wallace to make choice of such a situation, was the great friendship which existed between him and Monteith, to whose so-

ciety, they say, he was much attached, and which, by this means, he would have a better opportunity of enjoying. On this subject there is a difference of opinion; for other writers assert, that although Monteith was high in the confidence of Wallace, which, we think, is sufficiently evident from his appointing him to a trust of such importance—for, besides the governorship of the castle, his situation naturally gave him a command of a considerable portion of the district of Lennox—yet it is conjectured, that Wallace had other motives for selecting such a place of retirement than the mere pleasure of enjoying the society of a friend, however valued that friend might have been. The hostility which he had excited in the breast of Edward, by his uncompromising opposition to his power in Scotland, as well as by his invasion of England, gave him every reason to dread the revenge of that imperious prince; while the vacillating of a great portion of the nobility, joined to that inextinguishable hatred which existed against him in the minds of some of the most powerful, made it both desirable and prudent to look out for a place where, in the decline of life, he might be secure from the attempts of his country's enemies, as well as from the treachery of his own. The more immediate cause, however, may have been the safety of his surviving relations. The circumstance of so many of them having already suffered on his account, would, undoubtedly, make him consider it as a duty incumbent on him to provide for those that remained. These, it may be presumed, were the motives which induced him to stipulate for this little sanctuary, and not an overweening anxiety for the society of Monteith. His selection of him, however, for this important charge, shows the entire confidence in his fidelity.

With regard to the building itself, the ruins of which are still to be seen on the summit of Dumbarton, and known by the name of "Wallace's Tower," it has been recorded, that, on one occasion, the workmen had to desist from their operations, in consequence of the English having taken the town, situated at the base of the castle: they were not allowed to retain it long, as the ensuing night they were dislodged by Wallace and a portion of the garrison, who surprised them at midnight, and drove them out with great slaughter. This skirmish is sup-

posed to be the first in which he was engaged after resigning his office.

Blind Harry relates a characteristic anecdote of Wallace, who, after having driven the English out of Dumbarton, he proceeded towards the small castle of Rosneath, about ten miles distant, which was occupied by the enemy; and having learned that a marriage was to take place among them on the ensuing day, he posted his men in ambush on the road between the castle and the church, situated on the Gairloch, where the ceremony was to be performed. The cavalcade approached, accompanied by most of the soldiers of the garrison. The Scots, at the signal being given by our hero, burst from their concealment, and having with little difficulty overpowered their astonished adversaries, they put them to the sword, and having taken possession of the castle, they found a plentiful supply of provisions of all kinds, intended, no doubt, for the joyous occasion.

Edward, in the meantime, having settled his court in London, was aware, that the approach of winter would render the conveyance of military stores almost impracticable, lost no time in despatching to Stirling, Lochmaben, and the fortresses in his possession, those necessities of which they were most likely to be in want; as the active and persevering character of the enemy he had to contend with, made him apprehensive that they would avail themselves of his absence, and the inclemency of the season, to recover those fortresses which were in the possession of the English; and in this apprehension, he was not mistaken, for winter had scarcely commenced, before Wallace and the Scottish regents laid siege to, and recaptured several places of importance.

It is not necessary to allude to an attempt at a pacification between the King of England and the Scots, which some time previous to this, had been made to the King of France; and we do this the more readily, as the negotiations which then took place, conducts us to the termination of Baliol's career,—the sovereign, for whose rights Wallace had struggled so valiantly—and thrown a strong light on the character of Edward.

John Baliol, whom the Scots still acknowledged as their lawful monarch, had remained a prisoner in England since 1296. On the conclusion of a truce between the Kings of England and France, in 1297, Philip de-

manded the liberation of Baliol, as his ally, from the Tower. He required also, that the prelates, barons, knights, and other nobles, along with the towns and communities, and all the inhabitants of Scotland, of what rank and condition soever, should be included in the truce, and that not only Baliol, but all the other Scottish prisoners should be liberated, on the delivery of hostages. These demands were made by special messengers, sent for the purpose by Philip, to the King of England; and, it is probable, that those Scottish barons, who, had left Edward, on his embarkation in Flanders, and repaired to the court of France, had prevailed upon Philip to be thus urgent in his endeavours to include them and their country in the articles of pacification. Edward, however, had not the slightest intention of allowing the truce to be extended to the Scots. He was highly exasperated against them, and was then busy in collecting and organizing an army for the purpose of reducing their country. He did not, at first, however, give a direct refusal, but observed, that the request touching the king, the realm, and the nobles of Scotland, was so new and foreign to the other articles of truce, that it would require his most serious deliberation before he could reply. Immediately after this, he marched at the head of an overwhelming army into Scotland; and, it was not till after the battle of Falkirk, that he found leisure to send his answer to Philip, peremptorily refusing to deliver up Baliol, or to include the Scottish nobles in the truce, on the ground, that at the time when the articles of truce were drawn up, Philip did not consider the Scots as his allies, nor was there any mention of Baliol or his subjects at the time. "If," said Edward, "any alliance ever existed between Baliol and the French king, it had been deliberately and freely renounced." To this, Philip replied, "That, as far as the king of Scots, and the other Scottish nobles who were Edward's prisoners, were concerned, the renunciation of the French alliance had been made through the influence of force and fear, on which account it ought to be considered of no avail; that it was they alone whom he considered as included in the truce; and if any Scottish nobles had afterwards, of their own free will, submitted to Edward, and sworn homage to him, as had been done by the Earls

of Dunbar and Angus, and their sons, the King of France would not interfere in that matter."

Edward, however, who, at the time he made this reply, had defeated Wallace at Falkirk, and dispersed the only army which stood between him and his ambition, continued firm, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrances of Philip. The mediation of the pope was next employed; and at the earifest request of Boniface, the king consented to deliver Baliol from his imprisonment, and to place him in the hands of the papal legate, the Bishop of Vicenza. "I will send him to the pope," said Edward, "as a false seducer of the people, and a perjured man." Accordingly, the Constable of Dover, Sir Robert Burghersh, conveyed the dethroned king, with his goods and private property, to Whitsand near Calais. Before embarking, his trunks were searched, and a crown of gold, the Great Seal of Scotland, many vessels of gold and silver, with a considerable sum of money, were found in them. The crown was seized by Edward, and hung up in the shrine of St. Thomas the Martyr; the Great Seal was also retained, but the money was permitted to remain in his coffers. On meeting the legate at Whitsand, the Constable formally delivered to this prelate the ex-king, to be at the sole disposal of the pope; but a material condition was added, in the proviso, "that his holiness should not ordain or direct anything in the kingdom of Scotland concerning the people or inhabitants, or anything appertaining to the same kingdom, in behalf of John Baliol or his heirs." Edward's obsequiousness to the Roman See even went farther, for he conferred on the pope the power of disposing of Baliol's estates in England. These estates were many and extensive. They were situated in nine different counties, and gave a commanding feudal influence to their possessor. But the king had no intention of paying anything more than an empty compliment to Boniface; for he retained the whole of Baliol's lands and manors in his own hands, and some years afterwards bestowed them upon his nephew John of Bretagne. The dethroned king of Scotland was conveyed by the messengers of the pope to his lands and castle of Bailleul, in France, where he passed the remaining years of his life in quiet and obscurity.

It is not at all improbable that Wallace's renunciation of the office of governor conduced as much as any-

thing else to the liberation of Baliol; and it is more than likely that the crafty usurper conceived the measure might distract the regency, by exciting anew the jealous competition among the former claimants of the crown. But if such were his expectations he must have been miserably disappointed, on learning that the regents, awed no doubt by the watchfulness and influence of the late governor, continued to act in concert, and had even raised a numerous army, and laid siege to the strong castle of Stirling, which he had been at such pains to repair and provision. The Scottish regents sent a letter to Edward, acquainting him that information of the late truce had been sent them by the king of France, and that they were willing to agree to the stipulations, provided he would follow their example. Edward did not even deign to reply to this communication; and the operations against Stirling castle were carried on with such vigour, that the garrison were compelled to despatch messengers to the king, to acquaint him with their situation, as they were suffering from famine and the want of every necessary for preserving the fortress. Edward was fully aware of the importance of this place and determined to relieve it; for this purpose he assembled his army at Berwick early in November. His barons however he found intractable. Certain charters had not been confirmed as Edward had promised on oath to do, and certain lands in Scotland had been given to strangers without their consent, and contrary to his engagement; in consequence of which they resolutely refused to proceed beyond Berwick, alleging, among other excuses, the impolicy of undertaking a campaign beset with so many dangers, at such an advanced season of the year, where they would be compelled to march through impassable and marshy ground, where they could not procure forage for their horses or provisions for themselves. Edward and his barons were alike obstinate, and the latter retired in high dudgeon: while he, in the same humour, marched forward with the remains of his army to the relief of Stirling. He had not proceeded far, however, when he was informed of the strong position of the Scottish army, and of the resolute spirit with which they awaited his advance; and Edward submitted to the necessity of the case and retreated into England. Meanwhile the English were beleagured in Stirling, after making a brave

and obstinate defence, and suffering all the horrors of famine; upon which the king, finding it impossible to raise the seige, commanded them to negotiate a surrender; in consequence of which the castle was shortly after given up to Lord Soulis, one of the regents. The Scots garrisoned it, and committed it to the keeping of Sir William Olifant, a rough warrior, who proved himself, in every respect, deserving of the trust reposed in him.

John Comyn, the other regent, is also said to have gained some advantages over the enemy, and to have, in other respects, conducted himself with so much propriety, as to efface, in a great measure, the remembrance of his former disgraceful conduct. Indeed, so well pleased were the generality of his countrymen with his proceedings on the commencement of his regency, that we find some of the old historians applying to him the epithet of the "Gude Scottisman." From this circumstance, some authors have supposed that John Comyn, the regent, here alluded to, was not the same who behaved so treacherously at the battle of Falkirk. In this opinion they at first sight appear to be countenanced by Wynton, who styles him "Jhon Comyn, that was Jhon Comyn's son;" but, it must be recollected that there were three Comyns of the name of John, father, son, and grandson.

The gleam of popularity which, at this time, shone out upon Comyn is not to be wondered at. Placed in a situation desirable, on account of the prospect it opened up to his ambition—and which he could only retain by a line of policy in unison with the spirit of liberty which Wallace and his predecessor had infused into the people—he not only exerted himself against the common enemy, but used every effort in his power to gain the affections of his countrymen. His large possessions and his great wealth, which, it is said, were never equalled by those of any family in Scotland, enabled him to relieve the people from various imposts necessary to the support of the government; while the applications which the regency made to France for troops to assist them in the defence of their independence, were answered by liberal supplies of grain and wine, which, being a boon, were sold out to the people at a trifling price.

This procedure would, no doubt, ensure him the good opinion of that class of his countrymen, who could not

see the high price, which, in a national point of view, was paid for the comforts thus procured them. The more thinking party, however, saw through the policy of France, in thus attempting to cajole the Scots with a few cargoes of grain and wine, instead of fulfilling the terms of the treaty, offensive and defensive, that existed between them. From the dissatisfaction which this conduct, on the part of their allies, occasioned among the nobility of Scotland, it was determined to send commissioners to France to demand that assistance which they were bound to afford; and, if unsuccessful, they were instructed to proceed to Rome, and lay their complaints before the Pope, and to solicit his interference to restrain the English monarch from renewing his aggressions upon their country.

The accounts which Edward was daily receiving² of the progress of the Scots, determined him to renew hostilities, as soon as circumstances would permit; to enable him to do so the more readily he regained the good-will of his barons, by a compliance with their demands of the Great Charter and the Charter of the Forests, which were duly confirmed. He then summoned all who owed him military service in England and elsewhere, to attend upon him at Carlisle on the feast of the nativity of John the Baptist.

"On the day appointed," says Walter of Exeter, a historical bard, who accompanied the expedition, "the whole host was ready, and the good king, with his household, then set forward against the Scots, not in coats and surcoats, but on powerful and costly chargers, and, that they might not be taken by surprise, were well and securely armed.

"There were many rich caprisons embroidered on silks and satins; many a beautiful pennon fixed to a lance; and many a banner displayed.

"And afar off was the noise heard of the neighing of horses; mountains and valleys were everywhere covered with sumpter-horses and waggon with provisions and sacks of tents and pavilions.

"And the days were long and fine. They proceeded by easy journeys, arranged in four squadrons."

The first squadron was led by Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln.

The second was under John Warrenne, Earl of Surrey.

King Edward conducted the third squadron himself, and, says Walter, "brought up the rear so closely and ably, that none of the others were left behind. In his banner were three leopards courant of fine gold, set on red; fierce, haughty, and cruel; thus placed to signify that, like them, the king is dreadful, fierce, and proud to his enemies, for his bite is slight to none who inflame his anger; not but his kindness is rekindled towards such as seek his friendship or submit to his power." Truly the Scots would not call this part of his character in question.

The fourth squadron was led by "Prince Edward, a youth of seventeen years, and bearing arms for the first time. He was a well-proportioned and handsome person, of courteous disposition, and intelligent; and desirous of finding an occasion to display his prowess. He managed his steed wonderfully well, and bore with a blue label the arms of the good king his father." John de St. John, an experienced warrior, was in close attendance upon the prince, ready to instruct him in what his duty required.

Eighty-seven of the most illustrious vassals of the crown of England, with their retainers, were in the array, including Knights of Bretagne, Lorraine, and renegades of Scotland, among whom we find Alexander de Baliol, brother to the ex-king, the Earl of Dunbar and his son, Sir Simon Frazer, Henry de Graham, and Richard Siward. This formidable and splendid assemblage of feudal power, which completely filled the road from Newcastle, entered Scotland, where they found that the enemy, profiting by the experience of Wallace, had adopted that system of warfare which was their best security, and also the great cause of the invaders' sufferings during their last campaign—avoiding a battle, and cutting off the supplies. Edward halted his army about nine miles south of Dumfries, for the purpose of besieging the castle of Caerlaverock, a stronghold belonging to Herbert Maxwell, chief of a powerful border clan, who had refused to surrender to a summons which the king had sent forward. The siege of this castle has met with but little notice from the historians of either country. Langtoft describes it in few words:—

"A pouere hamlete toke,
The Castelle Karelaucrok,"—

Walter of Exeter gives a description which is extremely interesting, not only from its authenticity, but from the graphic manner in which he has portrayed the appearance and demeanour of the combatants. The following is a translation from the Norman French of Walter, by — Nicolas, Esq.

“Caerlaverock was so strong a castle, that it did not fear a siege, therefore the king himself, because it would not consent to surrender, resolved to aid in the attack. But it was always furnished for its defence, whenever it was required, with men, engines, and provisions. Its shape was like that of a shield; for it had only three sides all round, with a tower in each angle; but one of them was a double one, so high, so long, and so large, that under it was the gate, with a drawbridge, well made, and strong, and a sufficiency of other defences. It had good walls, and good ditches filled to the edge with water; and I believe, there never was seen a castle more beautifully situated; for all at once could be seen the Irish sea towards the west, and to the north a fine country surrounded by an arm of the sea, so that no creation born could approach it on two sides, without putting himself in danger of the sea.

“Towards the south it was not easy, because there were numerous dangerous defiles of wood, and marshes, and ditches, where the sea is on each side of it, and where the river reaches it; and therefore, it was necessary for the host to approach it towards the east, where the hill slopes. And in that place, by the king's commands, his battalions were formed into three, as they were to be quartered; then were the banners arrayed, when one might observe many a warrior exercising his horse: and there appeared three thousand brave men-at-arms; then might be seen gold and silver, and the noblest and best of all rich colours, so as entirely to illuminate the valley; consequently, those of the castle, seeing us arrive, might, as I well believe, deem that they were in greater peril than they could ever before remember. And as soon as we were thus drawn up, we were quartered by the Marshal, and then might be seen houses built without carpenters or masons, of many different fashions, and many a cord stretched, with white and coloured cloth, with many pins driven into the ground, many a large tree cut down to make huts; and leaves, herbs,

and flowers, gathered in the woods which were strewed within; and then our people took up their quarters.

“Soon afterwards, it fortunately happened, that the navy arrived with the engines and provisions; and then the footmen began to march against the castle; then might be seen stones, arrows, and quarreaux, to fly among them; but so effectually did those within exchange their tokens with those without, that in one short hour there were many persons wounded and maimed, and I know not how many killed.

“When the men-at-arms said that the footmen had sustained such losses who had begun the attack, many ran there, many leaped here and many used such haste to go, that they did not deign to speak to any one. Then there might be seen such kind of stones thrown as if they would beat hats and helmets to powder, and break shields and targets in pieces; for, to kill and wound was the game at which they played. Great shouts arose among them when they perceived that any mischief occurred.

“There, first of all, I saw the good Baron Bertram de Montbouchier, on whose shining silver shield were three red pitchers, with besants, in a black border.

“With him Gerard de Gondronville, an active and handsome bachelor. He had a shield neither more nor less than vaire. These were not resting idle, for they threw up many a stone, and suffered many a heavy blow.

“The first body was composed of Bretons, and the second were of Lorraine, of which none found the other tardy; so that they afforded encouragement and emulation to others to resemble them. Then came to assail the castle Fitz-Marmaduke, with a banner and a great and full troop of good and select bachelors.

“Robert de Willoughby I saw bore gold fretty azure.

“Robert de Hamsart I saw arrive, fully prepared with five followers, holding a red shield by the straps, containing three silver stars.

“Henry de Graham had his arms red as blood, with a white saltire and chief on which he had three escalop shells.

“Thomas de Richmond, who a second time collected some lances, had red armour, with a chief and two gemells of gold. These did not act like discreet people, nor as persons enlightened by understanding; but as if

they had been inflamed and blinded with pride and despair, for they made their way right forward to the brink of the ditch.

“And those of Richmond passed at this moment quite to the bridge, and demanded entry; they were answered with ponderous stones and cornues. Willoughby in his advance received a stone on the middle of his breast, which ought to have been protected by his shield, if he had deigned to use it.

“Fitz-Marmaduke had undertaken to endure as much in that affair as the others could bear, for he was like a post; but his banner received many stains, and many a rent difficult to mend.

“Hamsart bore himself so nobly, that from his shield fragments might often be seen to fly in the air; for he, and those of Richmond drove the stones upwards, as if it were rotten, whilst those within defended themselves by loading their heads and necks with the weight of heavy blows.

“Those led by Graham did not escape, for there were not alone two who returned unhurt, or brought back their shields entire.

“Then you might hear the tumult begin. With them were intermixed a great body of the King's followers, all of whose names, if I were to repeat, and recount their brave actions, the labour would be too heavy, so many were there, and so well did they behave. Nor would this suffice, without those of the retinue of the King's son, great numbers of whom came there in noble array; for many a shield newly painted, and splendidly adorned, many a helmet, and many a burnished hat, many a rich gambeson, garnished with silk, tow and cotton, were there to be seen, of divers forms and fashions.

“There I saw Ralph de Gorges, a newly dubbed knight, fall more than once to the ground from stones and the crowd, for if he was of so haughty a spirit that he would not deign to retire, he had all his harness and attire mascally of gold azure.

“Those who were on the wall, Robert de Tony severely harassed, for he had in his company the good Richard de Rokeley, who so well plied those within, that he frequently obliged them to retreat. He had his shield painted mascally of red and ermine.

“Adam de la Forde mined the walls as well as he

could, for the stones flew in and out as thick as rain, by which many were disabled. He bore, in clear blue, three gold lioncels rampant crowned.

"The good Baron of Wigtown received such blows, that it was the astonishment of all that he was not sturned; for, without excepting any lord present, none showed a more resolute or unembarrassed countenance. He bore, within a border indented, three gold stars on sable.

"Many a heavy and crushing stone did he of Kirkbride receive, but he placed before him a white shield, with a green cross engrailed. So stoutly was the gate of the castle assailed by him, that never did smith with his hammer strike his iron as he and his did there. Notwithstanding there were showered upon them such huge stones, quarrels, and arrows, that with wounds and bruises they were so hurt and exhausted, that it was with great difficulty they were able to retire.

"But as soon as they had retreated, he of Clifford, being advised of it, and like one who had no intention that those within should have repose, sent his banner there, and as many as could properly escort it, with Bartholomew de Badlesmere, and John de Cromwell, as those who could best perform his wishes; for whilst their breath lasted, none of them neglected to stoop and pick up the stones to throw them, and to attack.

"But the people of the castle would not permit them to remain there long. Badlesmere, who all that day behaved himself well and bravely, bore on white, with a blue label, a red fess between two gemells. Cromwell, the brave and handsome, who went gliding between the stones, bore on blue, a white lion rampant, double-tailed, and crowned with gold; but think not that he brought it away, or that it was not bruised, so much was it battered and defaced before he retreated.

"After these two, La Warde and John de Gray returned there, and renewed the attack. Those within, who were full expecting it, bent their bows and cross-bows, and prepared their espringalls, and kept themselves quite ready both to throw and to hurl.

"Then the followers of my Lord of Brittany recommenced the assault, fierce and daring as lions of the mountains, and every day improving in both the practice and use of arms. Their party soon covered the entrance

of the castle, for none could have attacked it more furiously; not, however, that it was so subdued, that those who came after them would not have a share in their labours; but they left more than enough for them also.

"After these, the people of my Lord of Hastings assembled there, where I saw John de Cretinques in danger of losing a horse. When upon it, one came beneath pricking it with an arrow; but he did not seem to be dissembling, he used such haste to strike him. On his white shield, he caused to be depicted a red chevron, with three mullets.

"He who bore a dancette and billets of gold on blue, John Deincourt by name, rushed on to the assault, and there extremely well performed his duty.

"It was also a fine sight to see the good brothers of Berkeley receiving numerous blows; and the brothers Basset likewise, of whom the elder bore thus,—ermine, a red chief indented, charged with three gold mullets; the other, with three shells; found the passages straitened. Those within continually relieved one another; for always, as one became fatigued, another returned fresh and stout; and, notwithstanding such assaults were made upon them, they would not surrender, but so defended themselves, that they resisted those who attacked all that day and night, and the next day until tierce. But their courage was considerably depressed during the attack, by the brother Robert, who sent numerous stones from the robinet, without cessation, from the dawn of the preceding day until the evening. Moreover, on the other side, he was directing three other engines, very large, of great power, and very destructive, which cut down and cleave whatever they strike. Fortified town, citadel, nor barrier,—nothing is protected from their strokes. Yet those within did not flinch until some of them were slain; but then each began to repent of his obstinacy, and to be dismayed. The pieces fell in such manner, wherever the stones entered, that when they struck either of them, neither iron cap, nor wooden target could save him from a wound.

"And when they saw that they could not hold out any longer, or endure more, the companions begged for peace, and put out a pennon; but he that displayed it was shot with an arrow, by some archer, through the hand into the face; then he begged that they would do no more to

him, for they would give up the castle to the king, and throw themselves upon his mercy. And the marshal and constable, who almost remained on the spot, at that notice forbad the assault, and these surrendered the castle to them."

The besieged, who had retarded the march of this immense army, and resisted their attack, "all that day and night, and the next day until tierce," were now passed in review before Edward, and, *including all ranks*, were found to amount to "*sixty men*," "who were," says Walter of Exeter, "beheld with much astonishment."—"They were all kept and guarded, till the king commanded that life and limb should be given them, and ordered to each of them a new garment. "But this account of the treatment of the prisoners," says Mr. Nicolas, the learned translator, "differs entirely from that in the Chronicle of Lanercost, where it is said that many of them were hung." The banner of Edward now waved on the battlement of Caerlaverock, along with that of Lord Clifford, to whom the king gave it in charge. Orders were then issued for the troops to prepare for the march.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that this heroic defence of the castle of Caerlaverock is so little noticed, especially by Scottish historians, and that we should be indebted for the particular description to a person accompanying the army of the invader, for the express purpose of recounting their defeat, and of sounding their praise.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Pope claims Scotland as belonging to the Church of Rome. Edward's indignation. English advance to Irvine. A Truce. Wallace visits France—attacked by a French Pirate. Thomas de Longueville, the Red Riever. Edward again invades Scotland.

IN a previous chapter, we mentioned, that certain commissioners from the regents of Scotland were ordered to proceed to Rome, and request the pope's interposition in behalf of their afflicted country, failing their demand of the fulfilment of their treaty on the part of France to supply them with troops. Edward had been married to the French king's sister, and their demand was refused; and the envoys proceeded to Rome, according to their orders. The consequence was, that Boniface directed an admonitory bull to Edward, and commanded Winchelsea, Archbishop of Canterbury, to deliver it to the king. This prelate, with much personal risk, owing to the unlicensed state of the country, and the danger of being seized by the hands of Scottish robbers, who roamed about, thirsting (as he tells us in a curious letter giving an account of his journey) for the blood of the English, travelled with his suite of clerks and learned dignitaries as far as Kirkcudbright; and having passed the dangerous sands of the Solway with his chariots and horses, found the king encamped near the castle of Caerlaverock, and delivered to him the papal bull. Its arguments, as far as concerned the right of the King of England to the feudal superiority of Scotland, were sufficiently sound and judicious; but, as was to be expected, the ground on which he could rest his own claim was far less satisfactory.—“Your royal highness,” he observed, “may have heard, and we doubt not but the truth is fast locked in the book of your memory, that of old the kingdom of Scotland did, and doth still belong in full right to the Church of Rome, and that neither your ancestors, Kings of England, nor yourself, enjoyed over it any feudal superiority. Your father, Henry, King of England, when, in the wars between him and Simon de Montford, he re-

requested the assistance of Alexander III., King of Scotland, did, by his letters-patent, acknowledge that he received such assistance, not as due to him, but as a special favour. When you yourself requested the presence of the same king, Alexander, at the solemnity of your coronation, you, in like manner, by your letters-patent, entreated it as a matter of favour, and not of right. Moreover, when the King of Scotland did homage to you for his lands in Tynedale and Penrith, he publicly declared that his homage was paid, not for his kingdom of Scotland, but for his lands in England;—that as King of Scotland he was independent, and owed no fealty; which homage, so restricted, you did accordingly receive. Again, when Alexander III. died, leaving as heiress to the crown a granddaughter, in her minority, the wardship of this infant was not conferred upon you, which it would have been, had you been lord superior, but was given to certain nobles of the kingdom chosen for that office.”—The bull proceeded to notice the projected marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Maiden of Norway; the acknowledgment of the freedom and independence of Scotland in the preliminary negotiations; the confusion which followed the death of the young queen; the fatal choice of Edward as arbiter in the contest for the crown; the express declaration of the King of England to the Scottish nobility, who repaired to his court during the controversy; that he received this attendance as a matter of favour, not as having any right to command it; and, lastly, it asserted, that if, after all this, any innovations had been made upon the rights and liberties of Scotland, with consent of a divided nobility, who wanted their kingly head—or of that person to whom Edward had committed the charge of the kingdom—these ought not, in justice, to subsist as having been violently extorted by force and fear.

After such arguments, his holiness went on to exhort the king, in the name of God, to discharge out of prison, and restore to their former liberty, all bishops, clerks, and other ecclesiastical persons whom he had incarcerated; and to remove all officers, whom by force and fear he had appointed to govern the nation under him; and he concluded by directing him, if he still pretended to any right to the kingdom of Scotland, or to any part thereof, not to omit the sending commissioners to him

fully instructed, and that within six months after the receipt of these letters, he being ever ready to do him justice as his beloved son, and inviolably to preserve his right.

In presenting this dignified and imperious mandate, the archbishop, in presence of the English nobles and the Prince of Wales, added his own admonitions on the duty of a reverent obedience to so sacred an authority, observing that Jerusalem would not fail to protect her citizens, and to cherish, like Mount Sion, those who trusted in the Lord. Edward, on hearing this, broke out in a paroxysm of wrath, and swearing a great oath, cried out—"I will not be silent or at rest, either for Mount Sion or for Jerusalem; but as long as there is breath in my nostrils, will defend what all the world knows to be my right." But the papal interference was, in those days, even to so powerful a monarch as Edward, a matter of no slight importance; and returning to his calmer mind, he requested the archbishop to retire until he had consulted with his nobility. On Winchelsea's re-admission, the king, in a milder and more dignified mood, thus addressed him:—"My Lord Archbishop, you have delivered me, on the part of my superior, and reverend father, the pope, a certain admonition touching the state and realm of Scotland. Since, however, it is the custom of England, that in such matters as relate to the state of that kingdom, advice should be had with all whom they may concern, and since the present business not only affects the state of Scotland, but the rights of England; and since many prelates, earls, barons, and great men, are now absent from my army, without whose advice I am unwilling, finally, to reply to my Holy Father, it is my purpose, as soon as possible, to hold a council with my nobility, and by their joint advice and determination, to transmit an answer to his holiness by messengers of my own."

It was particularly dangerous for Edward to quarrel with the Pope at this moment; he, therefore, assumed the appearance of solemn deliberation in the preparation of his answer. He summoned a parliament to meet at Lincoln, he wrote to the chancellors of the universities commanding them to send to this parliament some of their most learned and expert civilians, to declare their opinion as to the right of the King of England to be lord paramount of Scotland; and he gave directions to the abbots,

priors, and deans, of the religious houses in England, that they should diligently examine the ancient chronicles of their monastery, and collect and transmit to him by some one of their number, not only all matters illustrative of the rights competent to the King of England in the realm of Scotland, but every thing which in any way related to that kingdom. * On the meeting of the parliament, the king ordered the pope's bull to be read to the earls and barons assembled; and, after great debates amongst the lawyers who were present, the nobility of England directed a spirited letter to the pope, to which was appended one hundred and four seals. In this epistle, after complimenting the Holy Roman Church upon the judgment and caution with which she respected and inviolably preserved the rights of every individual, they remarked, that a letter from the Holy See had been shown to them by their lord, King Edward, relating to certain matters touching the state and realm of Scotland, which contained divers wonderful and unheard-of propositions. It was notorious, they observed, in these parts of the world, that from the very first original of the kingdom of England, the kings thereof, as well in the times of the Britons as of the Saxons, enjoyed the superiority and direct dominion of the kingdom of Scotland, and continued either in actual or in virtual possession of the same through successive ages. They declared that in temporals, the kingdom of Scotland did never, by any colour of right, belong to the Church of Rome; that it was the ancient fief of the crown and kings of England; and that the kings of Scotland, with their kingdom, had been subject only to the kings of England, and to no other. That with regard to their rights or other temporalities in that kingdom, the kings of England have never answered, nor ought they to answer before any ecclesiastical or secular judge, and this on account of the freedom and pre-eminence of their royal dignity, and the custom to this effect observed through all ages. Wherefore, they concluded—"having diligently considered the letters of his holiness, it is now, and for the future shall be, the unanimous and unshaken resolution of all and every one of us, that our lord the king, concerning his rights in Scotland, or other temporal rights, must in nowise answer judicially before the pope, or submit them to his judgment, or draw them into question by such submission; and that he must not send

proxies or commissioners to his holiness, more especially when it would manifestly tend to the disinheritor of the crown and royal dignity of England, to the notorious subversion of the state of the kingdom, and to the prejudice of our liberties, customs and laws, delivered to them by their fathers; which, by their oaths, they were bound to observe and defend, and which, by the help of God, they would maintain with their whole force and power." And they added, "that they would not permit the king to do, or even to attempt, such strange and unheard-of things, even if he were willing so far to forget his royal rights. Wherefore, they reverently and humbly entreated his holiness to permit the king to possess his rights in peace, without diminution or disturbance."

Edward, not contented with this bold and spirited refusal to submit his pretended rights in Scotland to the papal jurisdiction, directed a private letter to the pope, which he expressly declared was not a memorial to a judge, but altogether of a different description; and solely intended to quiet and satisfy the conscience of his Holy Father; and in which, at great length, and by arguments too trifling to require confutation, he explained to him the grounds upon which he rested his claim of superiority, and the reasons for his violent invasions of Scotland.

But let us return to the army. Edward, on leaving Caerlaverock, advanced into Galloway, and took several fortresses in that district. He appears to have been at Lochroiton on the 17th of July, and at Kirkcudbright on the 22nd of the same month. He returned to Caerlaverock, where he appears to have remained some time, as he proceeded thence to Dumfries on the 24th October, and was again at Caerlaverock on the 1st of November. His own operations appear to have been principally confined to the south of Scotland. Detachments of his army, however, extended themselves in various directions; and various conflicts occurred between them and the Scottish parties under Wallace, who continued to support the regents in their endeavours to expel the enemy. A strong division of the English army, commanded by the Earl of Surrey, advanced as far as Irvine, and came in contact with the Scottish forces headed by the regents. But, on being successively attacked by Surrey and the Prince of Wales, they rapidly retreated to the morasses and the mountains. Through this rough and difficult ground the

heavy-armed English soldiers could not penetrate; and the Welsh, whose familiarity with rocky passes rendered them well fitted for a warfare of this kind, obstinately refused to act. Another portion of the English army laid waste Clydesdale; and after destroying Bothwell advanced to Lesmahago, where a number of the inhabitants took refuge in the Abbey church; but this sanctuary did not avail them. Their merciless invaders set fire to the church, and many of the Scots perished in the flames. During the perpetration of this cruelty, Wallace, who was in the track of this portion of the destroyers, was forced to conceal himself in a cave, four miles distant from the tragic scene, carefully watching by means of his spies the motions of the enemy. This cave still bears his name, and is pointed out as an object of curiosity.

Edward meanwhile, had marched into Galloway, where he had an interview with the bishop of that diocese, who, having in vain attempted to mediate a peace, the Earl of Buchan, and John Comyn, the regent, repaired personally to Edward, with whom they had a violent debate. They demanded that Baliol, their lawful king, should be permitted peaceably to reign over them; and that their estates, which had been unjustly bestowed upon his English nobles, should be restored to their proper owners. Edward treated these proposals, which he considered as coming from rebels, with an unceremonious refusal; and after the Scottish nobles declaring they would defend themselves to the uttermost, they departed in great wrath.

While this warfare was carrying on by his detached squadrons, Edward was concerting measures for permanently annexing to his own dominions the district he had overrun. For this purpose he employed numerous bodies of his own subjects, in repairing and fortifying the different places of strength which had surrendered; and the reluctance of the Scots to assist in the subjugation of their country, appears evident from his being necessitated to bring labourers from England at a great expense.

Having spent four months on an expedition which led to no success of any importance, Edward was at last compelled by the approach of winter to delay to another season all his hopes of the entire subjugation of Scotland. Affecting therefore, now when it suited his convenience,

to be moved by the interposition of the pope, and by the representations of the ambassadors sent from the King of France, he granted a truce to the Scots, and artfully gave to a measure of necessity the appearance of an act of mercy. Edward however, cautiously added, that he accorded to the wishes of Philip, out of favour to him as his friend and relative, not as the ally of Scotland; nor would he give his consent to the cessation of arms until the ambassadors of France agreed to consider it in this light: so careful was this politic monarch lest any too hasty concession should interrupt his meditated vengeance, when a milder season should allow him to proceed against his enemies. The truce was to continue from Hallowmas to Whitsunday; and in consequence of it, all the English troops then in Scotland, except those in garrison, were withdrawn and disbanded.

Wallace, upon the conclusion of this treaty, thought he might now accept the invitation of the King of France, who was anxious to behold the man whose name had been familiar at the court of every sovereign in Europe, as the hero whose exertions in behalf of his own country had so often baffled the immense military force of England, and driven them from his native land. Accordingly, having selected a few friends, he embarked, and set sail for France. As they came within sight of the fertile shores of that country, their vessel was attacked by a notorious pirate of the name of De Longueville, who then infested the narrow seas, and was the terror of the merchants of Europe. After a desperate conflict, Wallace and his party succeeded in boarding the enemy's ship, and De Longueville, being vanquished in a personal combat with our hero, surrendered at discretion. The gallant manner, however, in which he acted during the engagement, gained him the esteem of Wallace, who subsequently discovered that he was a French nobleman, and, at one time high in favour at court, but who had fallen under the displeasure of the king, in consequence of having killed a knight in the royal presence; for which offence he was banished the kingdom, and his estates forfeited to the crown. Smarting under these injuries he had commenced a system of piracy, for which he was outlawed, and every avenue to the royal clemency shut against him. Wallace, on arriving at Paris, found himself so well received by the French monarch—who no

doubt expected his valuable assistance against the English in Guienne,—that he ventured to solicit, and, after considerable persuasion, obtained a pardon for Longueville, who had accompanied him to Paris in disguise.

Many stories are told of the adventures of our hero in France; but the researches of the historians and antiquarians of that country, amongst whom are many men of genius, who have left few sources of their national annals unexplored, have discovered in them no traces, either of Wallace or the pirate De Longueville; some even carry their incredulity so far as to doubt of his ever having been there. But his minstrel biographer, who composed his history principally from the Latin work of John Blair, assures us that he was in that country; it is likewise evident that he had received invitations from King Philip, as well as that he appears to have withdrawn himself, on more than one occasion, from Scotland; and as those writers who doubt of his being in France, have not endeavoured to fill up the blanks that his absence naturally makes in his history, nor appear to have any thing to urge against his visits to that country, but their *doubts*; we cannot allow these to stand in opposition to the recorded testimony of ancient writers, who ought to have been better acquainted with the transactions which took place so near their own times than authors who wrote many ages after them—more particularly as the circumstance in question could serve no political or party purpose at the time; and of course could afford no temptation for mis-statement. We may also remark, that the adventure with Longueville is corroborated by traditions still existing in the country, as well as by the fact of a family in Scotland, not long extinct, having derived their pedigree from that brave man; who, according to the law of arms of those days, thought himself bound to follow the fortunes of his conqueror. Longueville is said to have accompanied Wallace to Scotland, where he had lands assigned him; and the following notice in the Statistical Account of the parish of Kinfauns, goes a far way to establish the truth of what is here related.

“In the castle of Kinfauns is kept a large old sword, probably made about five hundred years ago, and to be used by both hands. It is shaped like a broad sword,

and is five feet nine inches long, two and a half inches broad at the hilt, and of a proportionate thickness, with a round knob at the upper end, near eight inches in circumference. This terrible weapon bears the name of *Charteris's sword*, and probably belonged to Sir Thomas Charteris, commonly called Thomas de Longueville, once proprietor of the estate of Kinsfauns. Sir Thomas Charteris, alias Longueville, was a native of France, and of an ancient family in that country. If credit can be given to accounts of such remote dates, when he was at the court of Philip le Bel, in the end of the thirteenth century, he had a dispute with, and killed a French nobleman, in the king's presence. He escaped, but was refused pardon.

"Having for several years infested the seas as a pirate, known by the name of the Red Reiver, from the colour of the flags he carried on his ship; in May, 1301, or 1302, (by Adamson's chronology,) Sir William Wallace, in his way to France, encountered and took him prisoner. At Wallace's intercession, the French king conferred on him a pardon and the honour of knighthood. He accompanied Wallace on his return to Scotland, and was ever after his faithful friend, and aiding in his exploits. Upon that hero's being betrayed and carried to England, Sir Thomas Charteris retired to Lochmaben, where he remained till Robert Bruce began to assert his right to the crown of Scotland. He joined Bruce, and was, if we may believe Adamson, who refers to Barbour, the first who followed that king into the water at the taking of Perth, January 8, 1313.

" ' That tyme wes in his cumpany
 A knyght off France, wyght and hardy ;
 And quhen he in the watyr swa
 Saw the king pass, and with him ta
 His ledy wnabasytly
 He saynyt him for the ferly,
 And said ; " A Lord ! quhat sall we say
 Off our lordis off Fraunce, that thai
 With gud morsellis sayrris thair pawnchis,
 And will bot ete, and drynk, and dawnsis ;
 Quhen sic a knyght, and sa worthy
 As this, throw his chewalry,
 Into sic perill has him set,
 To win a wrechyt hamellit !"
 With that word to the dik he ran ;
 And our estre the king he wan. ' "

“Bruce rewarded his bravery by giving him lands in the neighbourhood of Perth, which appear to be those of Kinfauns, and which continued in the family of Charteris for many years. It is to this ancient knight and to the antique sword above-mentioned, that Adamson refers in these lines of his ‘Muses Threnodie’ :—

“ ‘ Kinfauns, which famous Longovell
Sometime did hold ; whose ancient sword of steele
Remaines unto this day, and of that land
Is chiefest evident.’ ”

“About forty years ago, upon opening the burying vault under the aisle of the church of Kinfauns, erected by this family, there was found a head-piece, or kind of helmet, made of several folds of linen, or some strong stuff, painted over with broad stripes of blue and white, which seems to have been part of the fictitious armour, wherein the body of Sir Thomas Longueville, or Charteris, had been disposed.”

The truce which circumstances had extorted from Edward was no sooner expired, than he prepared for a fresh invasion of Scotland ; and Wallace, on hearing of the situation of his country, withdrew from the French court, and returned home. In the meantime, the cause of independence acquired a valuable accession in the person of Sir Simon Frazer, who, at last, awakened to the injuries of his country, and a just sense of his own unnatural conduct, deserted the standard of Edward, and enrolled himself among the assertors of the liberty of Scotland.

More intent than ever upon the reduction of this country, Edward once more summoned his barons to meet him in arms at Berwick, on the day of St. John the Baptist ; and directed letters to the different seaports of England and Ireland, for the assembling of a fleet of seventy ships to rendezvous at the same place. He determined to separate his force into two divisions, and to entrust the command of one to his son, the Prince of Wales. A pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas-à-Becket, and other holy places, was undertaken by the king, to solicit the intercession of the saints for the success of his arms ; and this being concluded, he put himself at the head of his army, passed the borders, and besieged and took the

castle of Bonkill, in the Merse. The Scots contented themselves with laying waste the country; and aware of the hazard of risking a battle, they attacked the straggling parties of the English, and distressed their cavalry, by carrying off the forage. The campaign, however, which had been great in its preparations, passed in unaccountable inactivity. An early winter set in with extreme severity, and many of the large war-horses of the English knights died from cold and hunger; but Edward, who was aware that the Scots only waited for his absence to rise into rebellion, determined to pass the winter at Linlithgow.

The treaty of peace between Edward and Philip of France was still unconcluded; and as Philip continued a warm advocate for Baliol and the Scots, Edward gave authority to his ambassadors at the French court to agree to a truce with Scotland. The ambassadors, however, were sharply reproved by the king and his nobles for giving the title of king to Baliol, and permitting, as the basis of the negociation, the alliance between France and his enemies. Edward was well aware, that if he admitted this, any conclusion of peace with Philip would preclude him from continuing the war which he had so much at heart; and, on ratifying the truce, he subjoined his protestation, that although he agreed to a cessation, he did not recognize John Baliol as the King of Scotland, nor the Scots as the allies of the King of France. This truce was to continue till St. Andrew's day, 1302, after which Edward was left at liberty to prosecute his views against that country. Having brought this matter to a close, the king proceeded by Morpeth and Durham to London.

The patriotism of the Scots was ill supported by their allies. Boniface soon deserted them, and with extreme inconsistency, forgetting his former declarations, addressed a letter of admonition to Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, commanding him to desist from all opposition to Edward. Wishart had been delivered from an English prison only a short time before; but unable to quench his love of liberty, or perhaps of intrigue, he had recommenced his opposition to the English; and the pope now addressed him as the "prime mover and instigator of all the tumult and dissension which has arisen between his dearest son in Christ, Edward King of England and the

Scots." At the same time his holiness addressed a bull to the body of the Scottish bishops, commanding them to be at peace with Edward, and threatening them, in case of disobedience, with a severer remedy.

Deserted by Boniface, the Scots still looked to Philip for support; and aware that the negotiations for peace between France and England were in the course of being concluded, they sent ambassadors to watch over their interests at the French Court. But Philip having been defeated in Flanders, became anxious at all risks to conclude a peace with Edward and to concentrate his efforts for the reduction of the Flemings. Edward, who had hitherto supported the Flemings, entertained the same wish to direct his undivided force against the Scots, and a mutual sacrifice of allies was the consequence. Previous however to the conclusion of this treaty, so fatal to the Scots, the English army experienced a signal defeat near Edinburgh.

John de Segrave had been appointed Governor of Scotland; and Edward much incensed at the continued resistance of the Scots, who, on the expiration of the truce, had recommenced the war with great vigour, directed letters to Ralph Fitz-William and twenty-six of his principal barons. By these he informed them that he had received intelligence from Segrave of the success of his enemies, who, after ravaging the country and seizing his towns and castles, threatened, unless put down with a strong hand, to invade and lay waste England. "For which reason," adds the king, "we request, by the fealty and love which bind you to us, that you will instantly repair to John de Segrave, with your whole assembled power of horse and foot." He then informs them of his resolution to be with his army in Scotland sooner than he at first intended; and that, in the meantime he had despatched thither Ralph de Manton, his clerk of the wardrobe, who would pay them their allowances, and act as his treasurer as long as they continued on the expedition.

Segrave marched from Berwick towards Edinburgh, about the beginning of Lent, with an army of twenty thousand men, chiefly composed of cavalry commanded by some of Edward's best leaders. Amongst these were Segrave's brothers, and Robert de Neville, a noble baron, who had been engaged with Edward in his conquest of

Wales. In approaching Roslin, Segrave had separated his army into three divisions; and not meeting with an enemy, each division encamped on its own ground, without having established any communication with the others. The first division was led by Segrave himself, the second probably by Ralph de Manton, called from his office, Ralph the Cofferer; the third by Neville. Early in the morning of the 24th of February, Segrave and his soldiers were slumbering in their tents, in careless security, when a boy rushed in, and called out that the enemy were upon them. The news proved true. Sir John Comyn one of the governors, and Sir Simon Fraser, hearing of the advance of the English, had collected a force of eight thousand horse, and marching in the night from Biggar to Roslin, surprised the enemy in their encampment. Segrave's division was entirely routed; he himself after being severely wounded was made prisoner, along with sixteen knights and thirteen esquires; his brother and son were seized in bed, and the Scots had begun to collect the booty, and calculate on the ransom, when the second division of the English army appeared. A cruel but necessary order was given to slay the prisoners; and this having been done, the Scots immediately attacked the enemy, who, after an obstinate defence; were put to flight with much slaughter. The capture of Ralph the cofferer, a rich booty, and many prisoners, were the fruits of this second attack, which had scarcely concluded, when the third division led by Sir Robert Neville, was seen in the distance. Worn out by their night march, and fatigued by two successive attacks, the little army of the Scots thought of an immediate retreat. But this, probably, the proximity of Neville's division rendered impossible; and after again resorting to the same horrid policy of putting to death their prisoners, an obstinate conflict began which terminated in the death of Neville, and the total defeat of his division. There occurred in this battle a striking but cruel trait of national animosity. Ralph the cofferer had been taken prisoner by Sir Simon Fraser; and this paymaster of Edward, though a priest, like many of the ecclesiastics and bishops of those fierce times, preferred the coat of mail to the surplice. On the order being given to slay the prisoner, Sir Ralph begged his life might be spared, and promised a large ransom. "This laced hauberk is no priestly habit," observed

Fraser, "where is thine albe, or thy hood? Often have you robbed us of our lawful wages and done us grievous harm. It is now our turn to sum up the account and exact its payment." Saying this, he first struck off the hands of the unhappy priest, and then severed his head with one blow from his body.

The remains of the English army fled with the news of their defeat to Edward; and the Scots, after resting from their fatigues, collected and divided their booty and returned home.

Wallace assisted, although only in a private capacity, at the battle of Rowln, along with his captive friend Thomas de Longueville. Scottish historians say nothing of his being present during the engagement; but the English historians positively assert, that it was solely owing to his exertions that the English army met with such a signal defeat.

This persevering bravery of the Scots in defence of their independence, was unfortunately united to a credulity which made them the dupes of the policy of Philip, who had the address to persuade the Scottish deputies then at Paris, that having concluded his own affairs with Edward, he would devote his whole efforts to mediate a peace between them and England; and he entreated them in the meantime, to remain with him at the French court, until they could carry back to Scotland intelligence of his having completed the negotiation with Edward on behalf of themselves and their countrymen. The object of Philip, in all this, was to prevent the return of the deputies, amongst whom were some of the most warlike and influential of the Scottish nobles, previous to the expedition which Edward was about to lead against their country. Unsuspicious of any false dealing, they consented to remain; and in the meantime addressed a letter to the governors and nobility of Scotland, exhorting them to be of good courage, and to persevere in vindicating the liberties of their country. "You would greatly rejoice," they say in this letter, "if you were aware what a weight of honour this last conflict with the English has conferred upon you throughout the world. * * * Wherefore, we beseech you earnestly, that you continue to be of good courage. And if the king of England consent to a truce, as we firmly expect he will, do you likewise agree to the same according to the form which

the ambassadors of the king of France shall propose by one of our number, who will be sent to you. But if the king of England, like Pharaoh, shall grow hardened, and continue the war, we beseech you, by the mercy of Christ, that you quit yourselves like men, so that by the assistance of God, and your own courage, you may gain the victory."

To gain the victory, over the determined perseverance and overwhelming military strength of the English king, the treachery of the Scottish nobles, and the deceit of her allies, was far from being an easy task. The distress of Scotland, from its exposure to the continued ravages of war, had reached a pitch which the people of the land could endure no longer. They became heart-broken for a time under a load of misery and suffering, from which they could see no relief but in absolute submission; the governor Coymn, the late governor Sir William Wallace, and the few patriotic nobles who were still in the field, found it impossible to keep an army together; and all men felt assured that the entire subjugation of the country was an event which no human power could possibly prevent or delay.

CHAPTER XV.

Wallace again visits France. Encounters an English Pirate. Edward invades Scotland. His desolating progress. Submission of Comyn the Governor. Wallace returns to Scotland. Conflicts with the English.

SIR William Wallace, replying on the good faith of Philip, and his desire of mediating a lasting peace between Edward and the Scots, returned a second time to France. This visit took place immediately after the battle of Roslin, as is asserted in the most positive manner by Blind Harry, his minstrel biographer, and is corroborated by the Scots chronicles. In the first voyage our hero is represented as having fallen in with and captured a French pirate, and in the second he is said to have had a similar rencounter with an Englishman of the same profession, whose depredations were principally directed against the Scottish vessels. Had the minstrel's work been one of pure fancy, this sameness of incident, we presume, would not have occurred;—for the good sense of Blind Harry would no doubt have suggested the propriety of a change of adventure. The English pirate, who is called John of Lyn, is first observed by the Scots, making his way out of the Humber, displaying a red sail and a flag at his mast-head bearing three leopards courant, the well-known insignia of Edward. The Scottish merchants, who were well aware of his ferocious disposition, were appalled at first sight; but, encouraged by Wallace and his companions, among whom was Thomas de Longueville, they prepared themselves for action, by stuffing sheep skins with wool, which appears to have been their cargo; and thus forming a kind of defensive armour to protect them against their better equipped assailants. On their refusing to surrender, the battle commenced by a heavy discharge from bows and cross-bows on the part of the English; and the Scots, who were not so well supplied with missiles, kept themselves as possible out of the way of the shot till it was nearly expended;—when laying their vessel alongside of the enemy, Wallace and his companions threw themselves on

board the pirate, and attacked the crew with the greatest fury. John de Lyn, seeing the desperation of the Scots, and the havoc they were making amongst his men, would gladly have made off, but the sword of Wallace was not to be evaded. The two leaders, therefore, came to a hand-to-hand encounter, and a short but furious conflict, the pirate captain was cut down by his opponent, and his men submitted to the conqueror. In this conflict none distinguished themselves more than De Longueville and John Blair, the chaplain of our hero—the latter of whom, with three successive arrows, shot three of the enemy, and otherwise conducted himself with the greatest heroism. As it would not have been becoming in Blair to have narrated such deeds of himself, we are told by the Minstrel, that the account of them was inserted in the memoir of Wallace by Thomas Gray, who acted as pilot on the occasion:—

“ Bot maister Blayr spak nothing off himsell,
In deid off armes quhat awentur he fell.
Schir Thomas Gray was than preyst to Walays,
Put in the buk how than hapnyt this cace
At Blayr was in, and mony worthi deid,
Off quhilk him self had no plesance to reid.”

In this there is consistency, as we are elsewhere informed, that Gray occasionally assisted in writing the achievements of the champion of Scotland.

On his arrival in France, Wallace made a division of the spoil among his followers, and presenting the captured ship to the merchants, he took his departure for Paris.

The reception he met with from the King of France is reported to have been highly flattering; and Sir William Wallace soon became involved in various adventures, all sufficiently romantic; but as the French historians appear, from their silence, to have been ignorant of them, we must refer the curious reader to the “buk” of the Minstrel. It has been asserted by several authors, that the name of Wallace and his adventures are frequently found in the songs of the ancient troubadours. This, however, may have arisen as much from the fame he had acquired in his native country, as from any chivalrous exploits he had performed in France. But in whatever manner he was employed in the land of the French, the proceedings of

the King of England soon called him to his own country.

The recent defeat at Roslin had chafed and inflamed the passions of Edward to the utmost; and his mortification was greatly increased by the praises that were everywhere bestowed upon the gallantry of the Scots; and the fame which their triple victory procured them at the different courts of Europe. The probability is, that but for the disgraceful discomfiture at Roslin, the resolution which Edward had so long displayed of reducing Scotland to subjection, might have gradually given way before the reflections occasioned by the immense losses of men and money which he had sustained in his various expeditions; and, perhaps, he would have contented himself with retaining possession of that part of Scotland which bounded his own dominions. The defeat, however, of Hegrave, and the subsequent proceedings of the victors, awakened afresh all the rancorous hostility of his ambitious and unprincipled mind; and he declared, that it was his determined purpose, either to reduce the nation to entire subjection, or to raze the land utterly with fire and sword, and turn it to a desert fit only for the beasts of the field—by one mighty effort to overwhelm the Scots, and to efface their name from among the number of the nations. In order to accomplish this project all the vassals of his crown were summoned to his standard. In his own kingdom of England, large levies of men and horses were raised, and the note of preparation was heard from one end of the land to the other. A powerful fleet was also equipped to attend the motions of the army, and prevent the chance of scarcity from interfering with that work of destruction he had in contemplation.

Wallace heard with sorrow of the mighty preparations that were making for the annihilation of his country's independence; and he resolved again to join his old associates, and brave along with them the fury of the storm that was about to burst upon their devoted heads. To his friends, who listened with increasing apprehension to the progress of the coming war, the hope of his return came like a sunbeam through the tempest that was blackening around them. The King of France, however, true to his new ally, retarded his departure, until the countless host of the invader had crossed the Tweed. In recording the history of this last miserable campaign, the historian has to tell a tale of sullen submission and

pitiless ravage; he has little to do but to follow in dejection the chariot wheels of the conqueror, and to hear them crushing under their iron weight, all that was free, and brave, in a devoted country.

Edward separated his army into two divisions. He gave the command of one to his eldest son, the Prince of Wales, who directed his march westward into Scotland, whilst the king himself, at the head of the second division, proceeded eastward by Morpeth and Roxburgh. The whole course of the king, as well as that of the prince, was marked by smoke and devastation—by the plunder of towns and villages—the robbery of granges and garners—the flames of woods, and the destruction of the small tracts of cultivated lands which yet remained, spreading desolation over the whole country. The havoc made are thus described by Barbour:—

“ Fra Wick anent Orkenay,
 To Mullyers nook in Gallaway;
 And stufit all with Ingliss men.
 Schyrefles and baileyheys maid he then,
 And alkin other officeris,
 That for to gowern land afferis,
 He maid of Ingliss nation;
 ‘ That worthy than sa rych fellone,
 And sa wykkyt and covatouss,
 And sa hawtane and dispitous,
 That Scottis men mycht do na thing
 That eulr mycht pleyss to thar liking.
 Thar wyffis wuld thai oft forly,
 And thair dochtrys dispitously:
 And gyff ony of thaim thairat war wrath
 Thai watyt hym weil with gret seath;
 For thai suld fynd some enchesone
 To put hym to destructione.
 And gyff that ony man thaim by
 Had ony thing that wes worthy,
 As horss, or hund, or othir thing,
 That war pleasand to thar liking;
 With rycht or wrang it wuld have thai.
 And gyff ony wald tham withsay,
 . Thai suld swa do, that thai suld tyne
 Othir land or lyff, or leyff in pyne.
 For thai dempt them eftir thair will,
 Fakand na kep to rycht na skill.
 A! quhat thai dempt thaim felonly!
 For gud knychtis that war worthy,
 For littill enchesone, or than nane,
 Thai hangyt be the nekbane.”

Those places which manifested the slightest disposition to defend their liberties, were consigned to indiscriminate carnage. Edward arrived at the capital with little interruption, in the beginning of June, 1303.

From Edinburgh, Edward continued his victorious progress by Linlithgow and Clackmannan to Perth, and afterwards by Dundee to Brechin, proceeded to Aberdeen. From this city, pursuing his march northward, he reached Banff, and from thence he pushed on to Kinloss, in Moray. Leaving this, he struck into the heart of Moray, and for some time established his quarters at Lochendorb, a castle strongly situated upon an island in a lake. Here he received the oaths and homage of the northern parts of the kingdom, and, it is probable, added to the fortifications of the castle. It is curious to observe that, after a lapse of near five centuries and a half, the memory of this great king is still preserved in the tradition of the neighbourhood, and that the peasant, when he points out to the traveller the still massy and noble remains of Lochendorb, mentions the name of Edward I., as in some way connected with their mysterious history. The fortalice of Lochendorb is thus described in the Statistical Account of the Parish of Cromdale: "A thick wall of mason-work, twenty feet high even at this period, and supposed to have been much higher, surrounds an acre of land within the loch, with watch-towers at every corner, all entire. The entrance to this place is a gate built of freestone, which has a grandeur in it easier felt than expressed. Several vestiges of houses are found within the walls, besides those of a church, which, without difficulty, can still be traced in the ruins. Great rafts, or planks of oak, by the cutting of the waters against the old walls, occasionally make their appearance. Tradition says, and some credit is due to the report, that the particular account of this building was lost in the days of King Edward the First of England."

From this remote strength, the king, penetrating into Aberdeenshire, reached the strong castle of Kildrummie, in Garvyach, from whence he retraced his route back to Dundee. Thence, probably by Perth, he marched to Stirling and Cambuskenneth, visited Kinross, and finally proceeded to take up his winter-quarters at Dunfermline, early in the month of December, where he was joined by

his queen. Among the places which made any resistance during this progress, the castle of Brechin was eminently conspicuous. It was commanded by Sir Thomas Maule, a Scottish knight of great intrepidity; and such was the impregnable nature of the walls, that the battering engines of the king could not, for many days, make the least impression. So confident was Maule of this, that he stood on the ramparts, and, in derision of the English soldiers below, wiped off with a towel the dust and rubbish raised by the stones thrown from the enemy's engines. At last, this brave man was struck down by one of the missiles he affected to despise, and the wound proved mortal. When he lay dying on the ground, one of the soldiers asked him if now they might surrender the castle. Though life was fast ebbing, the spirit of the warrior indignantly revived at this proposal, and pronouncing fearful maledictions on their cowardice, he expired. The castle immediately opened its gates to the English, after having stood a siege of twenty days.

The English king was chiefly employed at Dunfermline, in receiving the submission of those Scottish barons who had not made their peace previously; but these were comparatively few, as many of the principal nobility, when they heard of Edward's mighty preparations, in order to claim the merit of an early repentance, even met the invader on the borders, and thus procured more advantageous terms, than they otherwise would have obtained. Among those who thus started for the goal of slavery, few shared more largely in the rewards of iniquity, than Sir John Monteith. Having met Sir Aymer de Vallance, the renegade, he found means to acquire so much of his confidence, as to induce that minion of Edward to obtain for him not only a confirmation of the governorship of Dumbarton castle, but also an extension of his authority over the whole of the district of Lennox, and to secure the future favour of the usurper, this detested apostate basely offered up the life of his earliest friends to the cruelty of the tyrant.

Meanwhile accounts were brought to the English, that the war-note of Wallace had been heard in the woods on the banks of the Tay; and to prevent such a formidable foe from gathering any force, a body of troops under the command of Sir John Butler were despatched in pursuit of him. Butler readily undertook this service,

as it afforded him an opportunity of revenging the death of two of his relatives, who had already fallen by our hero. After ranging the country in all directions round the place mentioned, he was obliged to return without having once seen the object of whom he was in search, although, from the reports brought him by his scouts, as well as the evasive answers he received from such of the natives as he thought proper to question on the subject, he was perfectly satisfied that Wallace was in the country.

In the early part of this history we alluded to the admirable system of discipline which Wallace had introduced among his followers, and the readiness with which he could, by the sound of his horn, rally them round him in cases of emergency. From the frequency with which these calls had been made, there was scarcely a district in Scotland, where his signal was not understood and obeyed with alacrity. Although this was the case, we will not venture to say, that all who attended his summons were animated by pure and disinterested patriotism. Such, in fact, was not the case; as to many, it sounded as a welcome invitation to divide the spoil taken from their more wealthy enemies; whom—under the guidance of so daring and fortunate a leader—they never doubted of being able to conquer; and it is probable, they would have as readily attended the call, had it only been to a foray against some neighbouring clan; but the generosity with which Wallace divided his own share of the booty among those who had suffered most, or had conducted themselves with the greatest bravery in the conflict, gained him a complete ascendancy over the discordant materials of which his little armies were generally composed; and rendered him more formidable to the usurper, than all the treacherous and discontented aristocracy put together. It is therefore, not surprising, that the report of his return should have caused alarm among the English, who well knew his power. Edward was desirous to make this man his friend, but Wallace would listen to no terms short of a complete surrender of his false claims to the superiority over Scotland, a condition to which the English king would not submit, and therefore, he decreed the death of this, the only enemy who was proof against all his promises of rewards, or threats of vengeance.

On the night referred to, Sir William Wallace had landed in Scotland, accompanied by Sir Thomas de Longueville, his chaplain John Blair, Thomas Gray, and a few other friends who had attended him in France; and being in the neighbourhood of one of his old places of resort, he was anxious to obtain some knowledge respecting the state of the country, to enable him to form some plan for his future proceedings. For this purpose he sounded his war-note, and before the reverberations had died away among the woodlands, a rustling was heard among the underwood, and presently an unarmed Scot stood before him, who had been watching the landing of the party. From this man Wallace learned the miserable state of the kingdom, the ruthless devastations which had been committed by Edward, and the terror that pervaded the inhabitants. Finding, from the number of English that were in his immediate neighbourhood, the necessity of betaking himself to some place of concealment, he and his party were conducted by their informant to a farmhouse, in a secluded part of the country, occupied by a distant relation of Wallace, of the name of Crawford. Here he was welcomed, and a hiding-place, artfully constructed for him and his companions, in an adjoining barn, where they were at the time the search was made for our hero by Sir John Butler.

Here they might have remained, till some favourable opportunity presented itself for their appearing more openly. But, it seems, the suspicions of the English were awakened by the unusual quantity of provisions which Crawford was under the necessity of purchasing for the support of his numerous guests; and was subjected to a strict examination on the subject. Crawford mentioned the circumstance to his guests, and Wallace and his friends thought it prudent to retire to a neighbouring wood, and wait the result. They had but a short time adopted this precaution, before a party of Butler's soldiers made their appearance; and having surrounded the farm-house and offices, they discovered the hiding-place of the fugitives.

The wife of Crawford having refused to give any information regarding the route her late visitors had taken, they were about to proceed to violent measures to compel her to disclose their present place of retreat, when Wallace, who was informed by one of his spies of the danger

to which the good woman was exposed, advanced from the wood, and boldly sounded a note of defiance to the enemy. He had chosen a commanding situation, which could only be attacked from three narrow and rugged paths; and for the purpose of guarding these, he divided his little party, consisting only of about twenty men, into three divisions;—with the smallest of these divisions he undertook to defend the path that was most exposed to the enemy's attacks. Butler was not long in commencing the assault, which he did by a simultaneous movement on the three divisions of the Scots. The bold resistance, however, which he met with, aided by the rugged nature of the narrow ascent, rendered all the ardour of his troops unavailing. As night advanced, he withdrew his troops; and, having sounded a parley, he endeavoured to persuade Wallace to surrender, by showing him the folly of continuing a resistance, which must ultimately terminate in his own destruction, and that of his supporters. Our hero had not changed his mind, and advised him to stand to his arms; for, in place of surrendering, he intended before morning to become the assailant; and he gave him this timeous notice, in return for the kindness which he had shown for himself and his companions. Butler was enraged at this coolness, and considered it as an empty boast, though he did not decline to take every precaution to prevent his escape; and for this purpose he kept his men under arms all night. Our hero kept his promise; for, at daybreak, under cover of a thick mist, he descended at the head of his little band, and before the English were aware of his approach, broke in upon that quarter where Butler had taken up his station. The surprise which his sudden appearance occasioned threw the enemy into confusion, which the uncertainty of the number of the Scots greatly increased; and availing himself of the disorder into which they were thrown, Wallace pressed forward and came in contact with their leader, who, after a slight resistance, fell beneath his resistless arm. The Scots having forced their way through the enemy, Wallace discovered that their faithful host, Crawford, had been left behind;—he returned to the charge, and was fortunately in time to save his relative from the spear of an infuriated soldier, whom he slew; and, grasp-

ing his wounded friend in one of his arms, he carried him off in triumph to his companions. Favoured by the denseness of the fog, the gallant little band were soon lost to their pursuers. Though thus, for the present, relieved from their perilous situation, they are reported to have suffered great privations in the wild and unfrequented places to which they were forced to retire. However, their indefatigable chief, always fertile in expedients, found means to preserve them from actual starvation.

The inhabitants of Scotland were now truly dispirited, and generally submitted to a power which it was impossible for them to resist, while the governor Comyn, Sir Simon Fraser, Sir William Wallace, and the other leaders who adhered to the cause of their country, were driven into the wilds and fastnesses, where they still continued the war by irregular predatory expeditions against the convoys of the English.

Meanwhile Edward remained at Dunfermline, where, besides receiving the nobility to his peace, he engaged in other occupations little calculated to conciliate the Scots; for when at this place, his soldiers, by order of their master, with savage barbarity destroyed a Benedictine monastery, of such noble dimensions, that, an English historian informs us, three kings with their united retinues, might have lodged within its walls. On account of its ample size, the Scottish nobles had often held their parliaments within its great hall—a sufficient crime it would appear in the eyes of the king. The church of the monastery, with a few cells for the monks, were spared; the rest was razed to the ground. Nor was this all, for with a policy worthy of himself, he endeavoured to obliterate everything connected with the national independence of Scotland; having on a previous occasion removed from the ancient abbey of Scone, the famous and fatal stone upon which for many ages the Scottish kings had been crowned and anointed. This, considered by the Scots as their national palladium, along with the Scottish sceptre and crown, the English monarch placed in the cathedral of Westminster, as an offering to Edward the Confessor, and a memorial of what he deemed his absolute conquest of Scotland; in order now to annihilate every thing which could preserve

the patriotic feeling of the country which he had so cruelly overrun, he commanded the monasteries to be ransacked, and all the ancient records which they contained to be carried off and committed to the flames; so that the unfortunate Scots in future might have no documents to produce which could falsify his pretended claims to sovereignty over them. In this proceeding he might have been partly influenced by the discussion he had been engaged in with his spiritual father, the pope. Having so solemnly and boldly asserted the justice of his claim, to Boniface, it was but natural that he should wish to possess or destroy every evidence which could contradict his asseverations.

Lord Hailes, in his *Annals of Scotland*, speaking of the conduct of Edward, thus expresses himself:—"While the English were at Scone, they carried off some of the charters belonging to the abbey, and tore the seals from others. This is the only well-vouched example which I have found of any outrage on private property committed by Edward's army. It is mentioned in a charter of Robert I; and we may be assured that the outrage was not diminished in the relating." This is from the pen of a lawyer and a judge, who must certainly have known better; from any other person we might have considered this as proceeding from ignorance, but from him we are at a loss what term to apply to it. We shall give the following short extract from the works of Mr. Nicolson, a learned, intelligent, and candid Englishman—an evidence which we presume few people, even his lordship's admirers, will object to:—"King Eugene VII., about the beginning of the eighth century, is said to have ordered the depositing of all records, and books relating to the history of Scotland, at Icolmkill; where he caused their old library (much neglected and decayed,) to be pulled down and rebuilt in a very splendid manner, for this sole use and purpose. How long they continued there, and how well that excellent king's design was answered, I know not, but it is now too sad a truth, that most of these venerable remains of antiquity are quite perished; and it is generally agreed that they were destroyed on three remarkable occasions. The first of these was, when our king Edward the First having claimed the sovereignty of

Scotland, made a most miserable havock of the histories and laws of that kingdom; hoping that, in a short time, nothing should be found in all that country, but what carried an English name and face. To this end, he forbad, on severe penalties, the keeping of any such books or records: and proceeded so far as even to abolish the very name of Claudius Cæsar in his famous round temple, which he ordered to be called, as it is to this day, Arthur's Hoff, pulling away the stone which preserved the memory of that great emperor and his conquests." That a great deal of this story is true, appears from the scarcity of Scotch records in our state-archives in England. Amongst the foreign treaties in the Exchequer, there are about seventy original instruments, bagged up, and inscribed, "*Scotia ante Unionem*:" and in the Tower about one hundred rolls, relating to the affairs of that kingdom, under the title of "*Scotia*." The former of these begin at the reign of Edward the First, and end with that of Queen Elizabeth; and the latter commences as before, but falls no lower than the reign of Edward the Fourth, the rest being to be looked for in the Chapel of the Rolls. But these are all the produce of our own country; and, instead of enriching us with the spoils of our neighbours, seem rather to prove, that King Edward had an equal spite at the ancient records of both kingdoms—so little is there of apology to be made for so notorious a destroyer of the public registers, together with the private monuments, evidences, and conveyances of lands! I do not doubt but the reason of such barbarity has been justly enough assigned, by those who represent him as "*having a jealous eye over anything that might encourage his new vassals to rebel, endeavouring to root out all memorials of the nobility, and embase their spirits, by concealing from them their descent and qualities*." This, which is fully corroborated by numerous other writers, of both countries, is surely sufficient proof that Edward did endeavour to do away with all evidence against his pretended claim to the sovereignty of Scotland.

Comyn, the governor, convinced of the fruitlessness of his endeavours to stay the ravages of the English, he with all his adherents, submitted to Edward. The Earls of Pembroke and Ulster, with Sir Henry Percy, met Comyn at Strathorde in Fife, on the 9th February; and

a negociation took place, in which the regent and his followers, after stipulating for the preservation of their lives, liberties, and lands, delivered themselves up, and agreed to the infliction of any pecuniary fine which the conqueror should think right. The castles and strengths of Scotland were to remain in the hands of Edward, and the government of the country to be modelled and administered at his pleasure. From this negociation those were specially excepted for whom, as more obstinate in their rebellion, the King of England reserved a more signal punishment. In this honourable roll we find Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow; James the Steward of Scotland; Sir John Soulis, the late associate of Comyn in the government of the kingdom; David de Graham, Alexander de Lindesay, Simon Fraser, Thomas Bois, and William Wallace. For all these persons except Wallace, certain terms, more or less rigorous, were held out, on accepting which Edward guaranteed to them their lives and liberty; and we know that sooner or later they accepted the conditions. But of this great man a vigorous exclusion was made. "As for William Wallace," so says the deed, "it is covenanted, that if he thinks proper, to surrender himself, it must be conditionally to the will and mercy of the king." Such a surrender would have given Edward the unquestionable right of ordering his victim to immediate execution, provided he did not embrace the English party for which he undoubtedly would have had to provide sufficient hostages for his fealty.

But the foregoing list does not contain all the names of those who were still opposed to the English yoke. Blind Harry informs us, that a number of Wallace's old companions in arms, previous to his return from France, had fled for shelter to the islands and other places for security. Seton, Lauder, and Lundi, retired to the Bass. The Earl of Lennox and Sir Neil Campbell, had sought concealment along with Bishop Sinclair, in the island of Bute; and these last-mentioned worthies, on hearing of the arrival of Wallace, despatched a messenger to find him out, and inform him of the difficulties of their situation, and their anxiety to join him, as soon as he could approach their present place of refuge. The messenger soon met with our hero, who thankfully received the intelligence that there were still a few patriots willing to join him in

the struggle for their country; and he soon collected a little band who were willing to shed their blood in the glorious cause of Scotland's independence.

Edward, in making a progress towards Perth, was followed by Wallace and his associates, and appearing now in front, now in the rear, made frequent and impressive attacks upon the invading army as they struggled through the deep and rugged defiles of the country. But all his efforts could not retard the march of the conquerors. They continued to advance unmolested by any save the daring few who accompanied our hero; who having closely watched the motions of their foes in their laborious progress through the mountainous regions of the north, aware that they must return, they waited upon them, and resumed the same harassing system of warfare. Often from some height could the haughty Edward observe the lofty plume of the Scottish leader, as he dashed forward, at the head of his chosen few, to charge some detached portion of his numerous army; and while he beheld the enthusiasm with which his bravery inspired his followers, and saw the disorder of his own tried and generally valiant soldiers, quail at his approach, and hurry to gain the protection of the main body, his heart misgave him as to the stability of his conquest while Scotland contained a man whose appearance alone was sufficient to inspire his followers with so much confidence, and his enemies with so much dread. And Edward again determined that if he could not make this hero his friend, he would not permit him to live.

CHAPTER XVI.

Edward's policy respecting the settlement of Scotland. Endeavours to gain Wallace to his interest. Siege and Reduction of Stirling Castle. Edward's severity. Haliburton undertakes to betray Wallace.

EDWARD returned from the barren mountains of the north, and again took up his quarters in Dunfermline, judging that his presence in the country would contribute much towards establishing his authority, as he had generally observed that those places he had conquered from the Scots, were uniformly retaken whenever he returned home. He, therefore, took every precaution for the comfort of his troops; large supplies of provisions and other necessaries being ordered, both by sea and land, that his numerous army might not be again compelled by famine to retreat into England.

In order to secure his present conquest he began to form a constitution for Scotland, as similar as possible to that of his other dominions; and for this purpose he abolished all the old laws and customs—substituting those of England in their stead. In the prosecution of this object, he announced an English parliament to meet at St. Andrew's, to which the king summoned the Scottish barons who had again come under his allegiance. This summons was obeyed by all Scotsmen of any note except Sir William Wallace, Sir Simon Fraser, and Sir William Olivant, governor of Stirling Castle, the latter of whom refused either to appear or to surrender the trust which had been committed to him by Lord Soulis, who happened then to be in France. These patriots were, therefore, declared outlaws by the vote, not only of the English barons, but with the extorted consent of their broken and dispirited countrymen.

At length, Sir Simon Fraser, despairing of being able again to rouse the spirit of the nation, consented to accept the hard conditions of fine and banishment offered him by the conqueror; and Wallace found himself stand-

ing alone against Edward, excepted from all amnesty, and inexorably marked for death. Surrounded by his enemies he came from the fastnesses where he had taken refuge, to the forest of Dunfermline, and by the mediation of his friends, proposed, on certain conditions, to surrender himself. These terms, however, partook more of the bold character of the mind which had never bowed to Edward, than of the spirit of a suppliant suing for pardon. "When they brought his message," says Langtoft, "Edward was full grim, and curst him by the fiend as his forfeited traitor, proclaiming all to be traitors, who dared to harbour or support him, and setting a price of three hundred marks upon his head, in consequence of which he gave up all hopes of peace, and fled with speed into the impassable moors and marshes, where he supported himself by robbery."

It is singular that this circumstance should have escaped so many of our historians, as it is expressly and minutely stated by Langtoft, in his Chronicle, as follows:—

"Turn we now other weyes, unto our owen geste,
And speke of the Waleys that lies in the foreste;
In the foreste he lendes of Dounfermelyn,
He praied all his frendes, and other of his kyn,
After that Yole, thei wilde bespeke Edward,
That he might yelde tell him, in a forward
That were honorable to keep wode or beste,
And with his scrute full stable, and seled at the least,
To him and all his to haf in heritage;
And none otherwise, als terme tyme and stage
Bot als a propre thing that were conquest to him.
When thei brouht that tething Edward was full grim,
And bilauht him the fende, als his traytoure in Lond,
And ever-ilkon his frende that him susteyn'd or fond
Three hundreth marke he hette upon his warisoun
That with him so mette, or bring his hede to toun.
Now flies William Waleys, of presnouht he spedis,
In mores and mareis with robberie him fedis."

That Edward was indignant at Wallace no one can doubt; but that he would prefer converting this formidable enemy into a friend appears to be almost as certain, and if Wallace had been ambitious of honours or emoluments, nothing would have been wanting on the part of the English monarch to secure his friendship. We are informed by Fordun that among other great offers made

by Edward about this time, he tendered to Sir William Wallace the crown of Scotland, provided he would accept of it in fee of the crown of England; but even this great bribe was not sufficient. Wallace replied, with his usual dignity, that as he had been born a free man, he was determined to die one; and that he preferred rather to be the subject of his lawful sovereign, than the crowned slave of one who had no right to his allegiance. When Wallace was pressed by his friends to accept of this offer, he expressed himself thus:—"O! desolated Scotland, too credulous of fair speeches, and not aware of the calamities that are coming upon you! If you were to judge as I do, you would not easily put your neck under a foreign yoke. When I was a boy, the priest, my uncle, carefully inculcated upon me this proverb, which I then learned, and have ever since kept in mind:—

‘ *Dico tibi verum, Libertas optima rerum ;
Nunquam servili sub nexu vivito, fili !*

‘ I tell you a truth,—Liberty is the best of things, my son never live under any slavish bond.’

“Therefore, I shortly declare, that if all others, the natives of Scotland, should obey the king of England, or were to part with the liberty which belongs to them, I and those who may be willing to adhere to me on this point, will stand for the liberty of the kingdom; and by God’s assistance, will only obey our lawful king, John Baliol, or his Lieutenant.” That Edward was sincere in this offer has been doubted by several authors; he had already cajoled others by similar offers; and he might naturally conceive, that although Wallace should not be caught by the bait, the offer would have the effect of exciting the suspicions of his countrymen, and thereby weakening his influence among them. But whatever were the motives of this wily politician, Wallace was immovable, and scornfully rejecting all compromise, he remained the only Scotsman of his time who never acknowledged the authority of the king of England over his native country.

As the spring season was getting pretty far advanced, Edward was informed, that through the indefatigable exertions of his restless enemy, a considerable body of

troops had been got together, composed principally of the veterans who had been along with our hero at Stirling, or at Falkirk, and who were willing to follow their beloved leader to the death; the king, in order to disperse them, before they became too formidable, took the field, and proceeded towards Stirling, in the neighbourhood of which this body of troops had assembled, the castle of Stirling being still in the hands of the Scots. Wallace encamped on the same ground where he had gained his victory over the Earl of Surrey and Cressingham. But the days of victory were past. With the faint hopes of defending the passage of the Forth, the bridge was broken down and burnt. The moment Edward heard of this, he forded the river in person at the head of his cavalry, and dispersed the enemy, who, when compared with the English force, was so very insignificant, that they prudently retreated to their former places of concealment.

The castle of Stirling was now the only Scottish fortress that had not opened its gates to Edward; and on the 21st of April, 1304, he commenced the siege, which continued till the 24th of July, without intermission; thus occupying Edward and his army for three months and three days, during which time every artifice was put in practice, and every piece of mechanism then known was directed against the besieged. Sir William Olifant, the governor, an experienced soldier, on seeing the great preparations made by Edward against his comparatively feeble garrison, sent a message to the king, informing him that it was impossible for him to surrender the castle, without forfeiting his oaths and honour as a knight, pledged to his master, Sir John Soules, who had entrusted the keeping of the castle to him, and who was still in France; but if a cessation of hostilities were granted for a short time, he would instantly repair to France, inquire the will of his master, and return again to deliver up the castle, if permitted to do so. This was a proposal perfectly in accordance with the spirit of the age, and Edward, who honoured chivalry, would at another time probably have agreed to it; but he was now, to use the expressive words of the chronicler, "full grim," and roused to a pitch of excessive fury against the stubborn resistance of the Scots; he replied, "I will agree to no such terms; if he will not surrender the

castle, let him keep it against us at his peril." And Oliphant, accordingly, with the assistance of Sir William Dupplin, and other knights, who had shut themselves up therein, proceeded to fortify the walls, to direct his engines of defence, and to prepare the castle for the last extremities of a siege. Thirteen warlike engines were brought by the besiegers to bear upon the fortress.

"Threttene great engynes, of all the reame the best,
Brouht thei to Strivelyne, the kastle down to kest."

The missiles, which they threw, consisted of leaden balls of great size, with huge stones and javelins; and the leaden roof of the refectory of St. Andrews was torn away to supply ammunition for these deadly machines; but for a long time the utmost efforts of the assailants could not produce a breach in the walls, whilst the sallies of the besieged, and the dexterity with which their engines were directed and served, made great havoc in the English army. During all this time, the king, although his advanced age might have afforded him an excuse for caution, exposed himself with an almost youthful rashness. Mounted on horseback, he rode beneath the walls to make his observations, and was more than once struck by the stones and javelins thrown from the engines on the ramparts. One day, when riding so near that he could distinguish the soldiers who worked the machines, a javelin struck him on the breast, and lodged itself in the steel plates of his armour. Edward, with his own hand, plucked out the dart, which had not pierced the skin, and shaking it in the air, called out aloud, that he would hang the villain who had struck him. On another occasion, when riding within the range of the engines, a stone of great size and weight struck so near, and with such noise and force, that the king's horse backed, and fell with his rider; upon which some of the soldiers, seeing his danger, ran in and forced Edward down the hill among the tents. Whilst these engines within the castle did so much execution, those of the English, being of small dimensions in comparison with the great height of the wall, had but little effect; and when faggots and branches were thrown into the fosse, to facilitate the assault, a sally from the castle succeeded in setting the

whole in flames, and carried confusion and slaughter into the English lines.

The siege had now continued from the 21st of April to the twentieth of May, without much impression having been made. But determination was a striking feature in the powerful character of the English monarch; and he now saw that, without still greater efforts on his part, the place was not likely soon to capitulate. He, therefore, wrote to the sheriffs of London and York, commanding them to purchase and send instantly to him, at Stirling, all the balistæ, quarrells, bows and arrows, which they could collect within their respective counties; and at the same time he sent an order to the governor of the Tower, requiring him to forward with all haste, the balistæ and small quarrells which were under his charge in that fortress. Anxious, also, for the assistance and presence of all his best soldiers, he published at Stirling, an inhibition, proclaiming that no Knight, Esquire or any person whatsoever should frequent jousts or tournaments, or go in search of adventures and deeds of arms, without his special license; and aware that the Scottish garrison must soon be in want of provisions, he cut off all communication with the surrounding country, and gave orders for a new and dreadful instrument of destruction, the Greek Fire, with which he had probably become acquainted in the East. The mode in which this destructive combustible was used, seems to have been by shooting, from the balistæ, large arrows, to whose heads were fastened balls of ignited cotton, which stuck and set them on fire. In addition this, he commanded his engineers to construct two immense machines, which, unlike those employed at first, overtopped the walls, and were capable of throwing stones and leaden balls of three hundred pounds weight. The first of these was a complicated machine, which, although great pains were bestowed on its construction, did no great execution; but the second, which the soldiers called the wolf, was most simple in its form, and, from its size and strength, most murderous in its effects.

These great efforts succeeded; a large breach was made in the two inner walls of the castle; and the outer breach having been filled up with heaps of stones and faggots thrown into it, Edward ordered a general assault.

The brave little garrison, which for upwards of three months had successfully resisted the whole strength of the English army, were now dreadfully reduced by the siege. Their provisions were entirely exhausted. Thirteen females, wives and sisters of the defenders of the place, were shut up along with the soldiers, and their distress and misery became extreme. In these circumstances—their walls cast down, the machines carrying the troops wheeled up to the breach, and the scaling-ladders fixed on the parapet—the intrepid governor considered he had done his duty, and a deputation was sent to Edward, with an offer to capitulate, on security of life and limb. This proposal Edward received with the greatest contempt and scorn; but he agreed to treat on the terms of an unconditional surrender, and appointed four of his barons, the Earls of Gloucester and Ulster, with Sir Eustace de Poer, and Sir John Mowbray, to receive the last resolution of the besieged.

The two Knights, Mowbray and Le Peor, accordingly proceeded to the castle gate and summoned the governor; upon which Sir William Olifant, Sir William Dupplin, and their squire Thomas Lillay met the English Knights, and proceeded with them to an interview with the two earls. At this meeting they consulted for themselves and their companions to surrender unconditionally to the king of England; and they earnestly requested his permission to make this submission in his own presence, that he might witness their contrition.

To this their *magnanimous conqueror* consented, and forthwith appointed Sir John Lovel to fill the place of governor. A melancholy pageant of feudal submission now succeeded. Sir William Olifant, and, along with him, twenty-five of the gallant knights and gentlemen, his companions in this memorable siege, presented themselves before Edward, who received them in princely state, surrounded by his nobles and warriors. In order to save their lives these brave men were compelled to appear in a garb and posture, against which every feeling revolts. Their persons were stript to their shirts and drawers; their heads and feet were bare; they wore ropes around their necks; and thus, with clasped hands and bended knee, they implored the clemency of the king. Upon this, Edward, of his *royal mercy*, exempted them

from the ignominy of being chained; but Olifant was immediately sent off to the Tower, and the rest were imprisoned in different castles throughout England. The garrison was found to consist of no more than one hundred and forty soldiers: an incredibly small number if we consider that for upwards of three months they had resisted the efforts of the English army, led by the king in person. It is to be regretted that the names of the common soldiers have not been preserved; the names of the leaders in the defence of Stirling, are all that remain on record.

Domini Willielmus Olyfard,
 Willielmus de Dupplyn,
 miles,
 Fergus de Ardrossan,
 Robinus de Ardrossan, frater ejus,
 Willielmus de Ramseya,
 Radulfus de Haleburnor,
 Thomas de Knellhulle,
 Thomas Lellay,
 Patricius de Polleworche,
 Joannes de Kulgas,
 Willielmus de Anant,
 Robertus de Ranfru
 Walterus Taylleu,
 Simon Larmerer,

Domini Hugo Olyfard
 Walterus Olyfard
 Willielmus Gyffard
 Alanus de Vypont
 Andreas Wychard
 Godefridus le Botiller
 Johannes le Naper
 Willielmus le Scherere
 Hugo le Botiller
 Frater Willielmus de Keth, ordinis Sancti Dominici Prædicatorum
 Petrus de Edereston de domo de Kelsou ordinis Sancti Benedicti.

Having thus secured his conquest, by the reduction of the last castle which had resisted his authority; and having appointed English officers to the other strengths throughout Scotland, Edward left the temporary government of that country to John de Segrave; and accompanied by the chief of the Scottish nobility, proceeded by Selkirk and Jedburgh, to Yetholm upon the borders, and from thence to Lincoln, where he kept his Christmas with great solemnity.

The only man in Scotland who had steadily refused submission to Edward was Sir William Wallace; and Edward had scarcely arrived in London before accounts from the north convinced him of the precarious nature of his conquest, so long as Wallace remained at large in his native country; he had already experienced his great power, and the esteem in which he was held by the great

body of the people; he therefore, with that inveterate enmity and unshaken perseverance which marked his conduct to his enemies, now used every possible means to hunt him down, and become master of his person. He had already set a large sum upon his head; he gave strict orders to his officers in Scotland to be constantly on the alert; and he carefully sought out those Scots—men who were privately at enmity with Wallace, and bribed them to discover and betray him. And will it be believed that Edward found such mercenary tools amongst our hero's own countrymen, to do that which the king could not for very shame ask his enemies, the English, to undertake? He did find such an execrable wretch in the person of Ralph de Haliburton—a renegade whose name we regret to find in the list of the defenders of Stirling. Influenced by the great promises held out to him, Haliburton undertook the perfidious task, and for that purpose was allowed to return to Scotland. From his knowledge of our hero and his retreats among his native mountains and forests, where he first commenced his warfare with England, and driven by hard necessity for his support to a life of adventure and plunder against the enemies of his country, amid the general desertion of the nobility, a few of his faithful friends and veteran soldiers still shared his toils and his perils; and it seemed not improbable, that so long as their great leader survived, the hope and the resistance of the people might yet be preserved; and that the Genius of the national freedom, although for a while shorn of his strength, might yet rise into renewed vigour, and cast the fetters from his limbs. But to this fond hope, which yet lingered in the breasts of many of the friends of liberty, private treachery soon put an end; even now the intended destroyer was on his track. Haliburton watched all his motions, and contrived to have him beset by a strong body of cavalry, in a situation where he had no possible means of escaping, but by springing his horse over a precipice. This he effected; and his pursuers drawing back with horror, left our hero to pursue his retreat on foot, his gallant steed having perished in the fearful leap.

Wallace speedily joined his small party of adherents and proceeded further north, to escape from the pursuit of his enemies; at this period he had no suspicion of

treachery on the part of his pretended friends; and Haliburton, in the prospect of attaining great riches and the favour of Edward, still followed him, watching for a favourable opportunity to commit the vile deed, of securing his person dead or alive. The wished-for moment arrived, and Haliburton met his reward. The few friends who still clung to the fortunes of Wallace and the cause of independence, were reduced to the greatest distress for want of provisions. Our hero had left them, in order to look out for some place where they might obtain the necessary supplies; and, while wandering through the wilds of Lorn, overcome by hunger and fatigue he, threw himself down in despair, at the entrance of a forest, when the following adventure occurred, which we will give in the words of Blind Harry:—

“ Out of thair sycht, in till a forest syd,
 He sat him down undyr ane aik to bid;
 His bow and swerd he lenyt till a tree,
 In angwiss grieff, on grouff so turned he.
 His pitows mynd was for his men so wrocht,
 That off him selff littill as then he roucht.
 ‘ O wrech !’ he said, ‘ that neur couth be content
 Off our gret mycht that the gret God thee lent :
 Bot thi fers mynd, wylfull and variable,
 With gret lordschip thow coud nocht so byd stable ;
 And wylfull witt, for to mak Scotland fre ;
 God lykis nocht that I haff tane on me.
 Fer worthyar of byrth than I was born,
 Throuch my desyr wyth hungyr ar forlorn :
 I ask at God thaim to restor agayn ;
 I am the causs, I suld haff all the pain.’
 Quhill studeand thus, quhill flytin wyth him sell,
 Quhill at the last apon sleping he fell.
 Thre days befor thar had him folowed fyve,
 The quhilk was bound, or ellis to loss thair lyff :
 The erl of York bad thaim so gret gardoun,
 At thai be thyft hecht to put Walays down,
 Thre off thaim was all horn men off England,
 And twa was Scottis, that tuk this deid on hand ;
 And sum men said, thair thrid brothir betraissed
 Kyldrome eft, quhar gret sorow was raissed :
 A child thai had, quhilk helpyt to ber mett
 In wildernes amang thai montans grett.
 Thai had all seyn disseuyring off Walays
 Fra his gud men, and quhar he baid on cace ;
 Amang thyk wod in cower held thaim law ;
 Quhill thai persawyt he couth on sleping faw.

And than thir fyve approchit Walays neir !
 'Quhat best to do at othir gan thai speir
 A man said thus : ' It war a hie renoun,
 And we mycht quyk leid him to Sanct Johnstoun,
 Lo, how he lyis ; we may our grippis waill ;
 Off his wapynnys he sall get nane awaill.
 We sall him bynd in contrar off hys will,
 And leid him thus on baksyd off yon hill,
 So that his men sall nothing off him knaw ;
 The tothir thre assentit till his saw ;
 And than thir fyve thus maid thaim to Walays,
 And thocht thro' force to bynd him in that place.
 Quhat, trowit thir fyve for to hald Walays doun ?
 The manlyast man, the starkest off persoun,
 Leyffand he was, and als stud in sic rycht,
 We traist weill, God his dedis had in sycht,
 Thai grippyt him, then out off slepe he braid ;
 ' Quhat menys this ? ' rycht sodandly he said,
 • About he turnyt, and wp his armys thrang ;
 On thai traytouris with knychtlik fer he dang,
 The starkest man in till his armys hynt he,
 And all his harnys [brains] he dang out on a tree,
 A sword he gat son efter at he rayss,
 Champiounlik amang the four he gais ;
 Euyr a man he gert dee at a dynt,
 'Quhent wa was ded, the tothir wald nocht stynt ;
 Maid thaim to fle ; bot than it was na but,
 Was nane leyffand mycht pass fra him on fut.
 He folowed fast, and sone to dede thaim brocht ,
 Than to the chyld sadly agayn he socht,
 ' Quhat did thou her ' ' The chylde with [ane] pail face,
 On kneis he fell, and askit Walays grace.
 ' With thaim I was, and knew nathing thair thocht,
 In to saruice, as thai me bad, I wrocht.'
 • Quhat cerys thou her ' ' Bot meit,' the chylde can say.
 ' Do, turss it up, and pass with me away,
 Meit in this tym is fer bettir than gold."

Haliburton was one of the "twa Scottis" that took this
 deed in hand, and received the just reward of his
 treachery.

CHAPTER XVII.

Discontent of the nobility of Scotland. State of the Country. Bruce invited to take the crown. Conduct of Comyn towards Bruce. Wallace betrayed by Monteith.

THE tyrannical conduct of Edward, and more especially the cruelty he displayed towards the brave defenders of Stirling Castle, upon their surrender of that fortress, created disgust in the minds of several of the Scottish nobles; and his violent proceeding at length raised a spirit of opposition to his power in Sir John Comyn and Sir Robert Bruce. These chieftains, after Baliol, had the nearest pretensions to the crown of Scotland, and they had both been promised the crown by Edward, and they had both been deceived, as it was now evident to them, that it was the intention of the conqueror, to keep the conquest for himself, and to attach the kingdom of Scotland to that of England, from the alterations he had made in the constitution of the former country. Comyn, therefore, embraced the first opportunity of speaking to Bruce upon the subject, which he did by lamenting the degraded state to which their country was reduced by the wicked policy of Edward, who had all along endeavoured to sow discord among the Scottish nobles, whose interest it was to be friends; and by taking advantage of the animosities he thus excited, furthered his own ambitious and tyrannical designs.

These remarks immediately obtained the full confidence of his rival for the kingly dignity, who communicated without reserve, the several promises that had been held out to him by Edward, of seating him in security upon the throne; upon which Comyn made a proposal for the delivery of their country, from the power of the usurper, in which he offered to give Bruce his whole estates, on the condition that he relinquished all future claim, and assisted him to gain the crown; or he was willing to accept of Bruce's estates on the same terms. Bruce, who con-

sidered his claim to be better founded than that of Comyn, agreed to make over his estates on attaining to the kingdom through the assistance of Comyn: and a private bond was entered into between them for this purpose. In order to conceal their intentions from their wily adversary, Bruce agreed to attend upon Edward in London, while he left his brother Edward to look after his interest in Scotland.

Lord Hailes expresses his legal doubts against the existence of this bond or covenant between Bruce and Comyn, although it is recorded by all our respectable authorities. These objections of his lordship arose from the difficulty the parties would have experienced in effecting the contract. He says, "It must be held extraordinary, that the two conspirators met together, should have committed such a secret to writing, as if it had been a legal covenant to have force in a court of justice; but more extraordinary still, that they should have done this at the imminent hazard of their lives and fortunes, to the fidelity of a third party; for, I presume, it will be admitted, that two Scottish barons, in that age, could not have framed such an indenture without assistance." His lordship, in his anxiety to display his legal knowledge, and at the same time diminish the authority of preceding historians, entirely excludes from his mind, the manners and customs of the age respecting which he writes, and assimilates them too closely to those of his own times. Were it not for this, he would have seen neither difficulty nor danger in two nobles, of such extensive territorial possessions and feudal influence, procuring a person properly qualified, and whose secrecy, had there been cause for the least doubt, they would have had no hesitation in *effectually securing*. Even if their power did not extend to this, as the bond was not left in the possession of the drawer, where was the danger? Would any person capable of framing such an instrument, have been so excessively foolish, as to attempt to charge two of the most powerful barons in the kingdom with treason, without the least shadow of proof to support his accusation? Bonds, such as the one entered into between Bruce and Comyn, were never intended to exercise the ingenuity of lawyers; and all his lordship's legal experience would have failed in furnishing him with a single instance of an

attempt to enforce such a contract in a court of law. That such a contract did take place we have the authority of Wynton, the prior of Lochleven, the truth of his history has never been called in question; and it is corroborated, in every particular, by Barbour, the biographer of Bruce. From the following extract from Wynton, it will be seen that the "two conspirators" did not *meet* together, but were riding together to Stirling; and the bond was drawn and sealed the same night, in that place:—

" Quhen all this sawe the Brus Robert,
That bare the croune sune eftyrwurt,
Gret pytti of the folk he had
Set few wordis tharof he maid;
Apon a tyme Schyr Jhon Cumyn
To gydder rydand fra Strevylyn,
Said til him, ' Schyr, will ye noucht se,
How that governyd is this cuntre?
Thai sla our folk but enchesown,
And haddis this land agayne resown;
And yhe thar of full lord suld be,
For thi gyve ye will trow to me
The salt gere mak yhou thar-of kyng;
And I sall be in yhoure helpyng,
With thi yhe gyve me all the land,
That yhe hawe now in til yhoure hand,
And gyve that yhe will noucht do swa,
Na swilk a state apon yhowe ta,
All hale my landis sall yhouris be;
And lat me tak the state on me,
And bryng this land out of thryllage,
For thar is nother man nor page
In all this land na thayne sall be
Fain to mak thaim selfyn fre.'

The Lord the Brus hard this karping,
And wend he spak bot faythful thyng:
And for it lykyl til his wil,
He gave sune his consent thare-til,
And sayd, ' Syne yhe will, it be swa,
I will blythly apon me ta
The State; for I wate I have ryght;
And ryght oft makis the febil wycht.'

Thus thir twa lordis accordyt are.
That ilk nyght than wryttyne ware
Thare indenturis, and aithis maid
Till hald all, that thai spokyn had."

Meanwhile the state of Scotland, after the departure of the King of England, was such as well warranted the

liveliest fears for its continuing in subjection. Though there had as yet been no attempt at open insurrection, still there was that in the dogged bearing of the inhabitants which betokened anything but a kindly feeling towards the present state of affairs. The national sports and customs of the English, which it had been attempted to introduce among them, were shunned and disregarded by the oppressed and scowling natives; while those chiefs, who had formerly exhibited the greatest attachment to the cause of the national independence, were seldom seen or heard of, except when discovered holding their conferences in those sequestered retreats where they considered themselves secure from the prying and vigilant officers whom Edward had left behind him to protect his conquest.

Sir William Wallace, who had again been rejoined by several of the barons who had submitted to Edward, now saw that the condition of the country required a different remedy from that which had hitherto been applied. Baliol, whom he had all along considered as his lawful sovereign, though detained a prisoner by Edward, had, through the menaces of his conqueror, made over to the King of England his right to the crown and kingdom of Scotland. This act, in the opinion of Wallace, released him from his allegiance to one who had all along acted a part unworthy of his attachment; for though he could not deny his right to *resign* his crown and kingdom, yet he could not admit his right to *transfer* it to a stranger—an enemy—to the exclusion of the rightful heir; and as that heir was likewise a prisoner and tool of Edward, he naturally turned his attention on Robert Bruce, as the person best fitted by his birth and talents, to infuse that confidence in a people which necessarily arises from the presence of a person invested with lawful authority; besides, he considered the claim of Robert Bruce as superior to any others who might be expected to become competitors for the regal dignity. Having fully canvassed the subject in his own mind, he took the first opportunity of explaining his views to Sir Simon Fraser and those other chiefs who were likely to adhere to him, and found no difficulty in impressing his sentiments upon their minds; and a negociation was entered into with Edward Bruce, for the purpose of inviting his brother

from England to assume the crown; and it is also said that Gilbert Grimsby was also despatched as a special herald from Wallace and the confederated chiefs. Grimsby found little difficulty in reaching Bruce at the court of London, and explaining his errand, when Bruce appointed to meet with our hero on a certain night on the burgh-muir of Glasgow.

No time was now lost by Wallace and his friends, who were active in organizing the insurrection, which would undoubtedly burst forth as soon as Bruce, their future king, appeared among them; as it was their intention that he should be proclaimed as such on his first appearance. It does not appear that Comyn was consulted on this occasion by Wallace and his associates; indeed it was not likely, from the little intercourse that subsisted between them since Comyn's disgraceful conduct at the battle of Falkirk, that he should have been so consulted, especially when it was well known that he himself aspired to the high honour. It is probable, however, that the accession of Wallace and his party, to the proposal for placing Robert Bruce on the throne, was communicated to Comyn through the medium of Edward Bruce—the fiery temperament of whose mind was not always in unison with those maxims of sound policy necessary for conducting affairs of such moment—Edward Bruce, throughout his life was better fitted for a warrior than a councillor. Whether Comyn had ever been sincere in the agreement he entered into with Bruce, or whether he afterwards repented of the bargain he had made, is a point which, at this time, it is impossible to ascertain; but Comyn, under an exterior of the most finished dissimulation, and manners which had borrowed, in a constant intercourse with the courts of England and of France, the highest elegance and refinement, this potent baron concealed some of the worst and darkest features of the feudal character—unforgiveness and revenge. He hated Bruce for the success with which he had continued to retain the confidence of the English king, and to preserve his estates, whilst he himself, in return for his devotedness to the cause of liberty, had been rewarded with the loss of the royal favour, and a heavy fine; and he resolved to employ the secret information which he now possessed to ruin his rival, and reinstate himself

once more in the friendship of Edward. He accordingly transmitted private information of the conspiracy to that monarch; and whilst Bruce was still at the English court, he despatched a messenger with the letters and agreement, which contained decisive evidence of his guilt—urging, at the same time, the arrestment of his rival, as necessary to prevent the disturbance that was on the eve of breaking out in Scotland. This duplicity was worthy of the traitor at Falkirk.

The following brief outline, to what has already been stated, of this subtle and powerful baron, may not be uninteresting to the reader.

John Comyn, or as he is called by the Gael, *Jan Ruadh Mhac Jan Ruadh Chiuimein*, (Red John, the son of Red John Cumming,) was lord of Badenoch, Lochaber, and other extensive districts, and the head of the most potent clan that ever existed in Scotland. His power was more formidable than any of his fellow competitors for the crown. Upwards of sixty belted knights and their vassals were bound to follow his banner; and the influence of the family was such, that during the minority of Alexander III., after arriving from Scotland a strong faction, formed and supported by the interest of England, the Comyns and their adherents negotiated a treaty with Llewellyn, a prince of Wales. In this instrument, John, the father of the subject of our present notice, appears as Justiciary of Galloway.

It is uncertain at what time John Comyn succeeded to his father. He appears, however, in 1289, as joint agent along with James, the Steward, in the letter of the community of Scotland directed to Edward I. from Brigham. According to Blind Harry, he was married to a cousin of the King of England; and this, from all authorities, seems to have been the case, for he espoused Joan, the sister of Aymer de Vallance, whose father, William de Vallance, Earl of Pembroke, was uterine brother to Henry III. With this powerful connexion, he, no doubt, expected a different result in the submission respecting the throne of Scotland. This disappointment, in all probability, made him afterwards more ready to join the insurrection under Wallace; and if it had not been for the odium which he afterwards drew upon himself by his conduct at the battle of Falkirk, he might

have figured in the annals of his country with a fair and honourable reputation. While regent of Scotland, his behaviour was not only unexceptionable, but often praise-worthy. This, however, may have been partly owing to the strict surveillance which Wallace still exercised in the affairs of his country, or partly from a wish to conciliate his countrymen, in the event of a favourable opportunity occurring for his obtaining the crown—an object of ambition of which it is pretty evident he never lost sight of.

The treachery towards Bruce which has been charged against him by all authorities except Lord Hailes, also tended to deepen the stain on his character. This charge, however, we think has been sufficiently established; although a number of the objections urged by his lordship against it are of considerable weight. That a bond existed between them of the tenor already described, there is little doubt; and that the terms of this bond became afterwards matter of dispute, there is some reason to believe, as the fulfilment of it would have been dangerous to both. For had Bruce been placed upon the throne by the assistance of Comyn, and the latter had received the estates of Bruce according to the agreement, he would have been a subject far too powerful for the crown; and *vice versa* in the case of Bruce. "The quarrel, therefore, which subsequently took place in the chapel at Dumfries, and which ended in the death of Comyn (the particulars of which we shall give at the conclusion of this notice) *might* have arisen in an altercation respecting the difficulties involved in the completion of the bond, without either party having been guilty of a breach of faith. It was no doubt the policy of Bruce and his confederates, that the stain of treachery should be affixed on the name of Comyn, as it afforded the only plausible excuse for committing a murder in a place of such reputed sanctity. Indeed the latter having requested an interview within the precincts of a church showed nothing like a premeditated intention to quarrel; but since the deed was committed, it seemed necessary to the future safety and views of Bruce and his faction, that with the influence the character of the Comyns should be diminished. That they assisted in this last object themselves, is but too apparent; other-

wise it would be difficult to account for that odium which afterwards became attached to them. For while the Scots, in the Lowlands cried out against the "fause Comyns," their own vassals in Badenoch and Lochaber re-echoed the charge, till the very name became cognominal with deceit, so much so, that the following proverb is at this day remembered in those parts of the Highlands to which their influence extended: "While there are trees in a wood, there will be deceit in Comyn."

We will not however assert, that the enmity of the Gael arose from the conduct of the Comyns in the Lowlands; for if we may credit tradition still current in the West Highlands, this once powerful and oppressive family, gave sufficient cause, in their own territory, for the antipathy of their neighbours and vassals. The atrocities which they committed in their castles of Inverlochy, Badenoch, and other strongholds, which they polluted with their crimes, at last roused the slumbering vengeance of the people; and tradition, in her vague manner, dates the downfall of this potent clan, from the time of "Comyn's" flight from Onnich." At what period this occurred, it is impossible now exactly to ascertain; but with the particulars of the story we shall close this imperfect sketch.—

The Comyns, it seems, in the plenitude of their power, paid little attention, when it suited their wishes, to the abrogation of the infamous law of Evenus, and the "*mercheta mulierum*" was generally spurned, when the charms of the bride happened to please the eye of the chief. It would seem that three marriages were about to take place at Onnick, a little town on the borders of Lochaber. The women were beautiful and the men spirited and brave. The half-merk had been tendered at the gates of Inverlochy by the bridegrooms and their friends, and the refusal of it by the chief gave them reason to apprehend the fate that was intended for them. The case excited deep interest. The day of marriage approached, and brought along with it the Lord of Badenoch and his two sons, with their usual retinue. The half-merk was again tendered, and again it was refused. The men drew their swords, determined to guard the purity of their fair ones. A conflict ensued; friends gathered to the assistance of the injured; the two sons

of Comyn were killed, while he with his myrmidons, betook himself to flight. The country arose and pursued him, till the affair swelled to a general insurrection. All his train were sacrificed to the fury of the pursuers, many, no doubt, having more serious grievances to revenge. The flight continued till their obnoxious chief reached a hill, near the present site of Fort Augustus,—where, overcome with fatigue, he was seen to sit down apparently to rest himself. On coming up to him, however, they found that the wretched man had already paid the forfeit of his crimes. He was carried down and buried on the spot where the Fort now stands, which is still known to the Highlanders by the name of “Cill Chiumein,” or the burial place of Comyn; and the hill on which he died retains to this day the appellation of “Suidh Chiumein,” or Comyn’s Seat. Very few of the clan are now to be found in these districts.

But enough of the clan Comyn; we will now shortly relate the instance of treachery which was the cause of Comyn’s death, and then proceed with our narrative.

On receiving the evidence of Bruce’s guilt, Edward was in deep indignation and alarm; yet he had seen so much of the treachery and falsehood of the Scottish nobles, that, till the charge was fully investigated, he seems to have been unwilling to give full credit to the information of Comyn. The letters might be forged, and it was right that Bruce should be heard in his defence; if he was guilty, it would be expedient that his brother Edward, a man of great ambition and ability, who then held the castle of Lochmaben, and his younger brothers and partisans, who formed a powerful party, should be seized along with him; and time was required to bring them up, on some specious pretence, to England. In the meantime, he convoked a parliament, to which he summoned the Earl of Carrick along with the rest of his barons; and Bruce, ignorant of the treachery of Comyn, attended without scruple. After some common business had been gone through, the king suddenly turned to Bruce, and giving him the letter or indenture, asked him if he knew his seal, and was aware of the contents. In this mode of proceeding, it was evidently the intention of Edward to trust to his own discernment in discovering, by the impression made upon him at the time, whether

the Earl of Carrick was guilty or not; and it must be allowed that the crisis was one of fearful interest and danger: but Bruce showed himself to be an apt scholar of an able master in the art of dissimulation, and on this occasion saved himself by his address and presence of mind. With a well-dissembled astonishment, but evincing no symptoms of confusion, or of fear, he calmly replied, that the deed was a forgery; that the seal, though well imitated, was not his; and that if Edward would allow him a short interval to send for his real seal, which was not then in his possession, he would pledge his whole estates to prove to his satisfaction the truth of what he now alleged. This was said with so much of the appearance of injured integrity, that the King of England was for once foiled with his own weapons, and the Earl of Carrick had permission to leave the parliament, and to send for the documents on which he founded his defence. That very night, however, he received private intelligence from the Earl of Gloucester of a design to seize his person, and, taking horse, accompanied only by a single servant, he escaped with all speed into Scotland. Although discovered and compelled to fly, he was still ignorant of the person who had betrayed him; but a singular circumstance brought this to light. On the borders of the kingdom, he and his servant suddenly encountered a messenger who travelled alone, and seemed desirous of avoiding them. He was recognised as a servant of Comyn; and, a sudden suspicion darting into his mind, Bruce seized him, and searching his person, found new letters of Comyn to the king, enclosing further details of the conspiracy, and recommending the instant seizure of the Earl of Carrick. To slay the unfortunate envoy, and possess themselves of the despatches, was the work of a moment; and as all was now disclosed, Bruce, full of indignation at the treachery of Comyn, pressed on till he reached the castle of Lochmaben, where he held a council with his friends as to the most prudent mode of procedure. The conspiracy had been prematurely revealed; although it included some of the most powerful men in Scotland, its details had not been brought into completion; it was yet undiscovered how far the treachery of Comyn had extended; and till this was ascertained all idea of rising against the government of Edward would

be vain and dangerous. One thing, however, was fortunate. The presence of Bruce at this moment in Scotland occasioned no surprise, as the Court of the English Justiciary was about to be held at Dumfries, where, as proprietors of large estates in Annandale and Galloway, both Bruce and Comyn were bound to give attendance. The Earl of Carrick, therefore, was aware that he would meet Comyn at Dumfries; and he knew at the same time, that this baron could as yet have no suspicions that his treachery had been discovered. In such circumstances it was deemed the safest plan for Bruce to request an interview with Comyn, and to endeavour to discover whether the breach of faith was confined to himself or extended throughout other branches of the conspiracy.

They met at Dumfries, and Bruce, burning with ill-dissembled indignation, requested a private interview with the rival who had betrayed him, in the church of the Grey Friars, to which Comyn readily agreed. Bruce was accompanied by a few attendants, amongst whom were his brother-in-law, Sir Christopher Seton, Sir James Lindesay, and Gilpatrick of Kirkpatrick. Along with the Lord of Badenoch came only his brother, Sir Robert Comyn; and on the first salutation every thing seemed friendly and amiable. Bruce and his treacherous rival embraced in the manner of the times; according to Hemingford, they kissed each other; and whilst their friends retired to some distance, the two barons walked up towards the high altar, engaged in earnest discourse. As they advanced, however, words grew high and keen, and Bruce, forgetting for a moment his prudence, accused his associate of having betrayed their confidence to Edward. "It is a lie you utter," said Comyn, and Bruce without adding another word, instantly stabbed him with his dagger; and hurrying from the sanctuary which he had defiled with blood, rushed into the street, and called "To horse!" Lindesay and Kirkpatrick seeing him pale and agitated, demanded the cause. "I doubt," said the young baron, as he threw himself on his horse, "I doubt I have slain Comyn."—"And is that a thing to be left to a doubt?" cried Kirkpatrick; "I shall make surer work!" and instantly entered the church, where he found the unhappy man still alive, but bleeding, and lying on the steps of the high altar. By this time the noise of the scuffle had

alarmed his friends, and his brother Sir Robert Comyn rushing into the church attempted to save him; but Kirkpatrick slew the new opponent, and having despatched his dying victim, who could offer no resistance, rejoined his master.

We will now return to our narrative, which is drawing near a close. Wallace, who, as he conceived, among other friends, had secured the co-operation of Sir John Monteith to the measure then in agitation, for the purpose it is supposed, of giving as early notice as possible of the arrival of Bruce, had retained near his person a young man, the son of Monteith's sister, who was to have been despatched with the news to Dumbarton, as soon as their future monarch should arrive, when that important fortress was to have declared in his favour.

Wallace, confiding in the arrangements thus made, as the appointed time drew near for meeting with Bruce, collected his followers, and disposed of them in such a manner as to enable him to bring them together on the shortest notice. For the better concealment of his design, he retired to a small lonely house, at Robroyston, about three miles north-west of Glasgow. From Robroyston Wallace could easily make his way to the Clyde; cross the river, and keep his appointment with Bruce, without coming in sight of any of the English stationed in Glasgow. Here he waited with impatience for the night on which Bruce had appointed to meet him, little dreaming of the danger to which his sovereign was exposed through the treachery of Comyn, nor of the nefarious plan that was hatching for his own destruction, and by which he was soon after delivered into the hands of his enemies.

The means which were employed to accomplish the destruction of Robert Bruce, would have been of very little avail towards securing the objects intended, so long as Edward Bruce and our hero—who had identified himself with that party, remained to head the insurrection that was expected to break out; and, as all the magnificent promises of Edward had been unable to subdue the stern virtue of the patriot, his emissaries now bethought themselves of assailing the fidelity of those friends in whom he seemed chiefly to confide.

Considerable obscurity involves the last scenes of the life of this extraordinary man; and, amid the inventions

of apocryphal historians, and the traditions which have arisen out of the indignation of his countrymen, it is difficult to discover the minute particulars which attended his betrayal to England. The general facts, however, are ascertained upon unexceptionable historical evidence, and cannot be controverted. Unfortunately for the cause of liberty, the allurements held out by the enemies of Wallace were but too successful; and the honour of Sir John Monteith—a Scottish baron of ancient family, who had formerly served with our hero, and enjoyed much of his confidence and friendship—gave way to the tempter, and for the sake of gold sacrificed his benefactor. One historian says, “Perhaps we are to trace this infamous transaction to a family feud. At the battle of Falkirk, Wallace, who, on account of his overbearing conduct, had never been popular with the Scottish nobility, opposed the pretensions of Sir John Stewart, of Bonkill, when this baron contended for the chief command. In that disastrous defeat, Sir John Stewart, with the flower of his followers, was surrounded and slain; and it is said, that Sir John Monteith, his uncle, never forgave Wallace for making good his own retreat, without attempting a rescue.” Whatever was the motive, Sir John Monteith was the betrayer.

On the night of the 5th of August, 1305, Sir William, and his faithful friend, Curle, accompanied by the nephew of Monteith, had betaken themselves to their lonely retreat at Robroyston; to which place their steps had been watched by a spy, who, as soon as he observed them enter, returned to his employers.

At the dead hour of midnight, while the two friends lay fast asleep, the youth whose turn it was to watch, cautiously removed the bugle from the neck of Wallace, and carried it, along with his arms, through a hole in the wall; then slowly opening the door, two men-at-arms silently entered, and seizing upon Curle, hurried him from the apartment, and instantly put him to death. Wallace, awakened by the noise, started to his feet, and missing his weapons, became sensible of his danger, but grasping a large piece of wood, that had been used for a seat, he struck two of his assailants dead on the spot, and drove the rest headlong before him. Seeing the fury to which he was roused, and the difficulty they would

have in taking him alive, Monteith now advanced to the aperture through which the arms had been conveyed, and represented to him the folly of resistance, as the English, he said, having heard of his place of resort, and of the plans he had in contemplation, were collected in too great force to be withstood; that if he would accompany him a prisoner to Dumbarton, he would undertake for the safety of his person;—that all the English wished was to secure the peace of the country, and to be free from his molestation;—adding, that if he consented to go with him, he should live in his own house in the castle, and he, Monteith, alone should be his keeper;—that even now, he would willingly sacrifice his life in his defence; but that his attendants were too few, and too ill appointed, to have any chance of success in contending with the English. He concluded, by assuring Wallace, that he had followed in order to use his influence with his enemies in his behalf, and that they had listened to him on condition of an immediate surrender; but that if he did not instantly comply, the house would be set on fire, and he must perish in the flames. These, and other arguments, were urged with all the seeming sincerity of friendship; and Wallace submitted to be made a prisoner, trusting to his long acquaintance with Monteith, and to his word as a knight, accompanied him to Dumbarton, of which this Scottish baron, was now governor for Edward.

The treachery of Monteith was quickly disclosed, and the accounts of his success were received throughout Scotland by one universal burst of indignation. “Cursed be the day of the nativity of John Monteith!” says Blair, the faithful chaplain of Wallace, in a fragment which has reached our time; “may his execrated name be for ever blotted out of the Book of Life!” and the sentiment seems to have been as general as it was stern and un pitying.

On arriving at Dumbarton castle, the influence of the apostate Monteith appears to have been of no avail, as Wallace was cast into a dungeon, and heavily ironed, whilst the happy intelligence was transmitted to Edward, and immediate preparations begun for conveying him to England. He was strongly fettered, and placed upon a sorry horse, and guarded by a powerful escort under the command of Robert de Clifford and Aymer de Vallance,

he was hurried to the south through the most unfrequented route, in order to prevent the chance of a rescue.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Trial and Execution of Wallace. His Character.

THE capture of the Scottish hero was an event wholly unexpected by the English people, and the intelligence spread rapidly throughout the length and breadth of the land, while it produced in every quarter a deep and universal sensation. Labour of every kind was abandoned, and people of all ranks—from the nobleman to the peasant—flocked to those parts of the road where it was expected the illustrious captive would pass: he whose very name, but a short time before, spread dismay amongst the populace, was now become an object of pity—of genuine pity—to the majority of the English nation; and from the crowds that flocked around, his progress was more like that of a conqueror than of a captive.—All were anxious to obtain a sight of the formidable chief, who had so long defied the power of Edward; and when they reached the capital, the streets became so entirely blocked up by the multitudes of people, that an alarm seems to have been entertained for the safety of the prisoner; and, instead of proceeding to the Tower, as was at first intended, they took him to the house of William Delect, a citizen of London, in Fenchurch Street, where he was lodged for the night. From the circumstance of his having been taken to a private house, rather than to a place of greater security, it has been asserted by some, that Edward intended to make a last effort to gain Wallace over to his interest. This conjecture, however, is totally unsupported by subsequent proceedings, to entitle it to any degree of credit. The fact is, as already stated, that the anxiety of the people to behold the man who had filled England with terror, and whose achievements had resounded through every country in Europe,

rendered it impossible for the escort to make their way through the dense multitudes who had blocked the streets and lanes leading to the Tower.

Wallace was aware that his fate had been determined on, long before his seizure, and that he had nothing before him but death;—this he prepared to meet with that calm and unaffected fortitude which had always distinguished him. The thirst for revenge existed too keenly in the ruthless mind of Edward, to admit of much delay in the sacrifice of his victim. Though a consideration for the opinion of the more enlightened portion of his subjects, and the manner in which his conduct might be viewed at foreign courts, obliged him to have recourse at least to the form of a trial—the indecent haste with which it was brought on made the mockery of judicial procedure but too apparent. The day after his arrival, he was conducted, on horseback, from the house which his brief residence had made the scene of universal attraction, to take his trial in Westminster Hall. His progress from Fenchurch Street, according to Stowe, appears to have been a sort of procession. Lord John de Segrave, the fugitive of Roslin, acting as Grand Marshal of England, and armed cap-a-pie, while Geoffrey de Hartlepool, equipped in a similar manner, headed the cavalcade. He was followed by the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs, and the Aldermen, in their robes, accompanied by a brilliant concourse of barons and knights, with their attendants; and crowds of the train-bands and city officers guarding the prisoner. In the midst rode Wallace, mounted on a sorry horse, bare-headed, heavily manacled, and clothed in a mean garment; but preserving, under these circumstances of studied indignity, that serene deportment, which, combined with his tall figure and manly countenance, commanded the admiration of all who beheld him. As he gazed on the crowd, or looked up to the windows and balconies, which were filled with the population of this splendid capital, the spectacle of so great a man in the power of his enemies drew murmurs of involuntary pity from the multitude. His cruelty, his inveterate opposition, were forgotten; and the English, with the generosity of a high-minded people, saw nothing before them but that spectacle which was so

highly calculated to awaken our sympathy—a brave man bearing himself as became his character; under the pressure of inevitable misfortune.

Such sentiments, however, did not extend to Edward, in whose character, composed otherwise of many good qualities, pity for a fallen enemy was never a very prominent feature. By his directions, Wallace was exposed to a meanness of insult, which is revolting to every better feeling. But he bore all without a murmur, supported by the consciousness of having discharged his duty to his country, and of dying, as he had lived, a free man. He was placed on a low bench in Westminster Hall, and a crown of laurel was placed in mockery upon his head, as it was reported he had been heard to boast that he deserved to wear a crown in that place. The noble appearance of the man, joined to his calm and unruffled demeanour, entirely disarmed this childish attempt at ridicule of its intended effect.

Sir Peter Mallorie, the king's justice, then rose, and read the indictment, wherein the prisoner was impeached as a traitor to his sovereign, the king of England; as having burnt the villages and abbeys, stormed the castles, and slain the liege subjects, of his master. "To Edward," said Wallace, "I cannot be a traitor, for I owe him no allegiance; he is not my sovereign; he never received my homage; and whilst life is in this persecuted body, he never shall receive it. To the other points whereof I am accused, I freely confess them all. As governor of my country, I have been an enemy to all its enemies. I have slain the English; I have mortally opposed the English king; I have stormed and taken the towns, and castles, which he unjustly claimed as his own. If I, or my soldiers, have plundered or done injury to the houses, or to the ministers of religion, I repent me of my sin—but it is not of Edward of England that I shall ask pardon." On this candid admission, the following atrocious sentence was pronounced:—

For treason, he was to be first dragged upon a hurdle to the place of execution. For murder and robbery, he was to be then hung a certain time by the neck; and, because he had burned abbeys and religious houses, he was to be taken down alive from the gibbet, his entrails torn out, and burnt before him, his body to be quartered, and

the parts afterwards to be disposed of, as the *clemency* of his Majesty might suggest.

When the necessary preparations were made for carrying this horrible sentence into execution, the late champion of Scottish independence was brought forth from the place where he had been kept in confinement, heavily ironed, and chained to a bench of oak. He was then placed on a hurdle, and, surrounded by a strong guard of soldiers, ignominiously dragged to the Elms, in Smithfield. That self-possession and undaunted demeanour which he evinced during the trial, appeared equally conspicuous on the scaffold, surrounded by all the dismal apparatus of death. He looked upon death as he approached it, with unblenched cheek, and unquivering lip—at this awful moment he preserved an unshaken serenity. He requested the attendance of a priest, to whom he might confess himself; and it is painful to learn, that Edward who was present, in a fit of obstinate and impotent resentment sternly, refused this last comfort, forbidding any clergyman to retard the execution for such a purpose. On hearing this disgraceful command of his sovereign, Winchelsea Archbishop of Canterbury, (the same individual who so faithfully discharged his duty at Caerlaverock, as related in Chapter xiv.) who stood near the scaffold, boldly reprov'd the King for interfering with his temporal authority in a matter exclusively religious. "The church," said the faithful prelate, "will not suffer any of her penitent children, whatsoever may have been his guilt, or to whatsoever country or kindred he may belong, to request the offices of a priest in his last moments and to be refused, and I myself will officiate, since none other is so near." Saying this he ascended the scaffold, received the confession, and gave him absolution, immediately after which he departed for Westminster, unwilling to be a spectator of the cruelties which he knew were to follow, and which he no doubt considered as fixing a deep stain on the character of his country.

The spectacle which was now exhibited to the gaze of the inhabitants of London, was such as perhaps has never before, nor since, been presented to the populace of any land. The *last freeman of an ancient people*, not less renowned for their bravery than their love of independence, stood a calm and unshrinking victim, ready to be immolated

at the shrine of despotism. That powerful arm, which had long contended for liberty, was now to be unstrung beneath the knife of the executioner; and that heart, which never quailed in the sternest hour of danger, was doomed to quiver in the purifying flames of martyrdom.

During the pause which preceded the unhallowed operations, Wallace turned to Lord Clifford, who stood hard by, and entreated of him that a psalter, which had been taken from his person, should be restored, and his request was complied with. As his hands were chained at his back, he desired a priest, who stood near, to hold it open before him; and it was observed that, during the whole time, he regarded the volume with a look of mingled devotion and affection. Even when he was taken down from the gallows, yet living and sensible, his eyes continued fixed upon the sacred book during the horrible process of embowelling which followed, till, overpowered by his sufferings, he expired among their hands with all that passive heroism which may be supposed to belong to so elevated a character. This psalter had been his constant companion from his early years, and appears to have been the only article of property that Wallace died possessed of. It was probably the gift of his mother, or some dear friend, and had been kept about his person till he fell into the hands of his enemies. The execution was now concluded by striking off the head, and separating the body into four quarters. The head was immediately placed upon London Bridge, and his quarters distributed through the country. The right arm was sent to Newcastle, the left arm to Berwick, the right leg to Perth, and the left to Aberdeen. "They hewed his body," says Langtoft, "into four quarters, which were hung up in four towns, as a warning to all who, like him, raised their arms against their lord, that their mangled remains would be gazed upon by the Scots, instead of his banners and gonfannons, which they had once so proudly followed." But he might have added, that they were trophies more glorious than the richest banner that had ever been borne before him; and if Wallace already had been, for his daring and romantic character, the idol of the people—if they had long regarded him as the only man who had asserted, throughout every change of circumstances, the independence of his country—now that the muti-

lated limbs of this martyr to liberty were brought amongst them, it may well be conceived how deep and inextinguishable were their feelings of pity and revenge. Tyranny is proverbially short-sighted; and Edward, assuredly, could have adopted no more certain way of cannonizing the memory of his enemy, and increasing the unforgiving animosity of his countrymen.

The cruel execution of Wallace, and the heroic spirit with which he vindicated the rights of a free people in his last moments, appear to have made a remarkable impression in England. The manly and christian-like conduct of the Archbishop of Canterbury may not unfairly be taken as a criterion of the feelings of the higher classes; and it is well known to every reader of history, that about this time the barons of England were disposed to look with feelings of favour and indulgence upon any manifestation of a spirit of independence. On the other hand, amongst the people, immediately after the death of Wallace, there arose a report that his soul, without requiring any protracted purification in purgatory, had been immediately ushered into paradise; and an English monk declared that he had beheld, shortly before his execution, a vision of angels and blessed spirits, ready to receive upon their celestial pinions the pure soul of the patriot, and to convey it to those mansions which are prepared for the martyrs of liberty.

But if such were the feelings which arose in England, it may be easily imagined that the sentiments produced by the execution of the hero, in his own country were of a far deeper tone and character. From one extremity of the land to the other, a spirit of hatred and an intense thirst for vengeance, were transmitted throughout the great body of the people; and the sight of the mangled remains of their favourite leader only served to make them cling more fondly to his memory, and more deeply denounce the tyranny which had sacrificed so dear a victim on its remorseless altar. There was not a spot connected with his life, that did not become hallowed in the eyes of his countrymen; and the devotedness which sacrificed every personal feeling to the great cause in which he died was immediately repaid with a popularity which remains, after nearly five centuries and a half, superior to that enjoyed by any other Scottish hero—even

to that of Robert Bruce, who gloriously concluded the good work which Wallace had commenced—the independence of Scotland. Throughout every part of Scotland, even to this day, some traditions are to be found of his exploits, some remarkable scenes are pointed out as connected with his great struggle for liberty. Much, indeed, of all this is uncertain; part decidedly untrue; but the admiration of his countrymen which has thrown so rich a tint of the marvellous around his history, and transformed him from a patriot into a Paladin, has been favourable to the permanency of his reputation; for the bulk of mankind are ever more captivated by what is wonderful and romantic, than interested in the truth; and the records of the Scottish leader, engraven upon the rocks and mountains of his native country, and taught amid such lonely solitudes by the fathers to their children, bid fair to be as immortal as those immutable features of nature with which he has become connected.

“Tyranny is proverbially short-sighted,” we have said; and the course of events which soon followed the death of Wallace, demonstrates the truth of the remark. For fifteen years had Edward been employed in the reduction of Scotland—Wallace, his mortal enemy, was murdered—the rest of the nobility had sworn allegiance—the fortresses of the land were in the hands of English governors, who acted under an English guardian—a parliament was held at London, where the Scottish nation was represented by ten commissioners; and these persons, in concert with twenty English commissioners, organized an entirely new system of government for Scotland. The English king, indeed, affected to disclaim all violent or capricious innovations; and it was pretended that the new regulations which were introduced were dictated by the advice of the Scottish nobles, and with a respect to the ancient laws of the land; but he took care, in the midst of all his pretensions, that every thing that really marked an independent kingdom should be destroyed; and that, whilst the name of authority was given to the Scottish commissioners who were to sit in parliament, the reality of power belonged solely to himself. Scotland, therefore, might be said to be entirely reduced; and Edward flattered himself that he was now to be allowed to enjoy that sovereignty which had been purchased by a

war of fifteen years, and at an incredible expense of blood and treasure. But how idle are the dreams of ambition! In less than six months from the execution of Wallace,* this new system of government was thrown to the winds, and Scotland was once more free from the bondage imposed upon her for a time. The patriotic spirit of Wallace had apparently descended upon the formerly vacillating Bruce, who boldly cast asunder the bonds of slavery and became the monarch of an independent and a happy nation.

We will now refer shortly to the *character* of this idolized hero of the Scottish nation; and for what follows we are greatly indebted to the research of a modern writer of great ability.

We have already seen, that this great and exemplary patriot fell a martyr to the rights and independence of his country, than whom, if we consider his extraordinary personal and mental accomplishments—joined to his inextinguishable and disinterested love of liberty,—a greater hero is not to be found in the annals of any people. Born to a slender inheritance, and unconnected by birth with the opulent families of his country, he derived no advantages from those circumstances which often assisted other distinguished characters in attaining that place in the temple of fame to which their ambition was directed. To his own genius he was indebted for a system of tactics, eminently calculated for the contest he had in view; and with his own arm he gave the first impulse to the cause of freedom, which afterwards, on the field of Bannockburn, was crowned with such glorious and decisive success, under a kindred spirit—on whom the inspiring mantle of our patriot descended, as he winged his flight to the regions of immortality.

In person, Wallace was eminently fitted to grace that elevated station among mankind, for which his genius and talents so conspicuously qualified him. His visage was long, well proportioned, and exquisitely beautiful; his eyes were bright and piercing; the hair of his head and beard auburn, and inclined to curl; that on his

* Wallace was executed 23rd August, 1305. The new regulations for the government of Scotland were introduced on the 15th October of the same year. Bruce was crowned on the 27th March, 1306.

brows and eye-lashes was of a lighter colour; his lips were round and full. Under the chin on the left side, was a scar, the only one visible, although many were to be found on his person; his stature was lofty and majestic, rising the head and shoulders above the tallest men in the country. Yet his form, though gigantic, possessed the most perfect symmetry; and with a degree of strength almost incredible, there was combined such an agility of body and fleetness in running, that no one, except when mounted on horseback, could outstrip, or escape from him, when he happened to pursue. All-powerful as a swordsman, and unrivalled as an archer, his blows were fatal, and his shafts unerring; as an equestrian, he was a model of dexterity and grace; while the hardships he experienced in his youth, made him view with indifference the severest privations incident to a military life. In common intercourse, his accents were mild, and his manners grave and polite. In the field, when addressing his soldiers, his discourse was brief and animating, and the sound of his voice thrilled through their ears like the spirit-stirring notes of the clarion. Great and varied, however, as were the accomplishments nature had lavished on his person, the graces with which she had enriched his mind threw a radiance over all the rest of her gifts. Untaught himself in the military art, he became the instructor of his countrymen, and his first efforts were worthy the greatest captain of that or any other age.

If we may judge from his regard to the sanctity of an oath, his ideas of morality appear to have been much at variance with the corrupt practice of the age. Uncontaminated by the pernicious example of the great men of the country, he chose rather to bear hunger and every other privation the unsheltered outlaw might be exposed to, than purchase the advantage so much prized by others, at the expense of taking an oath he had no intention of holding sacred;—still, this inflexible rectitude of soul could not shame the aristocracy from their convenient perjuries; for the bands by which he strove to unite them together, became like ropes of sand in the hour of trial. Notwithstanding, however, all the difficulties which were thrown in his way, the vigour of his own character, and the wisdom of his measures, enabled him to achieve

the deliverance of his native land. To the charges of ambition and usurpation that were brought against him, he gave the noblest refutation, by resigning the bauble of power into the hands of those little spirits, who would otherwise have betrayed the cause of national independence, or involved their country in all the horrors of civil war. Thus, his virtuous self-denial preserved the people whom his valour had set free.

From the foregoing narrative, the reader will perceive the formidable array of talent and power with which Wallace had to contend. To an aristocracy, at that time, perhaps, unrivalled in Europe, and headed by a monarch as distinguished for ambition, determination of purpose, and warlike propensities, as he was notorious for the absence of those virtues which constitute the redeeming traits in the character of a soldier—the magnanimous patriot had at first little to oppose, save the innate energies of his own invincible heart, and the resources of a genius which Heaven seems peculiarly to have fitted for the task which had fallen to his lot. That Scotland, distracted by faction, and deprived of all foreign aid, should, under the guidance of one who ranked among the humblest of her nobles, have again advanced herself to the dignity of an independent state, in defiance of the power of England, backed by the resources of Ireland and Wales, was considered by her adversaries as too humiliating to their national character to admit of their relinquishing the contest. The renewal of every invasion was, however, met by an increasing stubbornness of opposition; and the chivalrous conqueror of Palestine, the “high-souled” Plantagenet, at last condescended to *steal* away the enemy he could neither bribe nor subdue, and thus purchase the brief and delusive semblance of a victory, at the price of everlasting dishonour.

The mind of Wallace was imbued with the most exalted ideas of independence; and the stern and inflexible spirit with which he guarded his own and his country's honour, could only be equalled by the scrupulous delicacy he exercised towards the feelings of others. Loving freedom for her own sake, he considered her sanctuary, wherever placed, as too sacred to be violated. Among the many proofs of this elevation of mind, the following may be mentioned:—On the surrender of the French

pirate, Thomas de Longueville, the high-spirited cutlaw was anxious to know the name and the character of his conqueror. On the name of Wallace being announced to him, he fell on his knees, and thanked God that so worthy an enemy had been his victor; and, according to the custom of the age, he tendered his service along with his sword. "Service from you, Sir Thomas," said the gallant Scot, with an accent of kind familiarity, "I cannot accept; your friendship is what I desire."—On another occasion, in the heat of an engagement, having, as he conceived, given orders to Sir John Graham in a manner too peremptory—after the victory had been secured, he came up to his brave friend, and surprised him with an apology for anything like harshness he might have displayed in his manner of expressing himself. Graham, however, was quite unconscious of hearing anything that he had reason to take amiss; and expressed a hope that he would always act towards him and others in the same manner when the interest of the country was at stake.

In the division of spoil, the portion that fell to the share of Wallace he set apart as a fund, from which those were rewarded who had distinguished themselves by their valour or good conduct while contending for the liberty of their country—thus stimulating their efforts in their own cause, by the sacrifice of their personal advantage. The delicacy, also, which he evinced, in excluding his relations from any participation in those grants and emoluments with which he rewarded the services of others, showed him exempt from any selfish or mercenary feeling, and decidedly averse to the aggrandisement of his own relations at the national expense. In those times, when driven to the woods and natural fastnesses of the country, where his little party were exposed to the greatest distress, from the scarcity of provisions, the expedients he had recourse to for their relief, and the self-denial he exercised in order to husband the slender supplies for their use, impressed his followers with sentiments of admiration and gratitude. The system which he introduced, during the short period of his regency of disciplining and subdividing the nation, evinced the clear and comprehensive views he entertained of the true interests of the country; and had his successors in power followed up the

same measure, it would doubtless have been productive of incalculable benefit to the kingdom; as, independent of the great force the legislature might thus have been enabled to bring into the field, in cases of emergency, it would have undermined and eventually overthrown the feudal superiority of the barons, and those petty confederations among clans, which have been for so many ages the bane and curse of Scotland. His views, however, for the immediate and permanent prosperity of the country, took even a more extensive range than what is embraced by the above wise and salutary measure. Aware of the benefit which Scotland had formerly derived from her commercial intercourse with the continent, we find his attention, shortly after the battle of Stirling, seriously turned towards the re-establishment of this important object; and while the strength of the nation was mustering at Roslin, for the invasion of England, her indefatigable leader was actively engaged in despatching intimation to the different Hanse-towns, that the ports of Scotland were again open to the trade of all friendly powers. The plan which he pursued in his invasions, was the most efficient for exhausting the enemy's country, enriching his own, and encouraging his countrymen to flock to his standard. Though often severe in his retaliations, yet, towards women and children, he always exercised the greatest humanity.

During the period he was Governor of Scotland, the country was beginning to feel the return of her former prosperity. With the spoil of the enemy he had diffused plenty over the land; the poor were protected; thieves were promptly and severely punished; cheats and liars were discouraged; and good men met the reward of their virtues. The vigilance with which he watched over the public weal was unremitting, and never for a moment gave place to any object of personal consideration. Even those duties which are often considered paramount to every other, were with him secondary to the interest of his country; for, on the death of his mother, his presence being required elsewhere, he entrusted the performance of her obsequies to his friend and chaplain John Blair, and his confidential servant Curle:—which duty they discharged with becoming solemnity in the cathedral of Dunfermline. To this place of sepulture, it has been generally

conjectured, the fragments of his own body were secretly collated by his companions, after the barbarous and impolitic exposure had taken place. At his execution that self-command and nobleness of soul, which formed such luminous traits in his character, never for a moment forsook him. Without deigning to breathe a murmur, either at the injustice of the tyrant who condemned him, or the unhappy man who betrayed him, he submitted to his fate with that becoming dignity, which drew even from his enemies expressions of unqualified admiration.

The following lines, translated from the original Latin by Hume of Godscroft, are understood to have been composed some time after the execution of our illustrious patriot, by his afflicted friend and chaplain, John Blair; and with this pathetic tribute of genius at the shrine of departed greatness, we shall close this chapter:—

“ Envious death, who ruins all,
Hath wrought the sad lamented fall
Of Wallace; and no more remains
Of him—than what an urn contains !

Ashes for our hero we have—
He for his armour, a cold grave,
He left the earth—too low a state !
And by his acts o’ercame his fate.

His soul Death had not power to kill,
His noble deeds the world do fill
With lasting trophies of his name.
O ! hadst thou virtue loved, or fame,

Thou could’st not have insulted so
Over a brave, betrayed, dead foe,
Edward, nor seen those limbs exposed
To public shame—fit to be closed

As relics in an holy shrine,
But now the infamy is thine.
His end crowns him with glorious bays,
And stains the brightest of thy praise.”

CHAPTER XIX.

Conclusion.

THE wisdom of the ancient Egyptians has been celebrated, but in no respect does it appear more conspicuous than in the uses to which they applied the historical records of their country. By their laws, the hand which kept a faithful transcript of passing events, and registered with strict impartiality the transactions and characters of their kings, was removed from the knowledge and influence of those whose deeds were thus related. On the accession of every new monarch, it was part of the ceremonial to read in his presence the record of his predecessors. By this means he was apprised of the faults he ought to avoid, and admonished of the virtues it was incumbent on him to emulate; while the reflection arising from the certainty that after his death his name also would be consigned over to posterity—either to receive the meed of grateful remembrance, or the impress of merited reprobation, according to his actions—operated on the royal mind as a useful and salutary restraint.

Other nations aspired to imitate the Egyptians; but national imitation is too often like that among individuals. The faults and blemishes of the original are more readily caught than its beauties and perfections. Thus, while the grossness of Egypt's mythology was most servilely copied, *one* practice which gave dignity and utility to her history was entirely overlooked, and the pen of the historian, in place of being wielded by the impartial, fearless, and untrammelled friend of public virtue, was more frequently found in the hand of the needy parasite; employed in the base and degrading occupation of varnishing the enormities of the ermined tyrant, whose ambitious progress to distinction had been marked by the subversion of the rights and the carnage of his fellow-men. This prostitution of the historic muse is not unknown among modern authors, and may be often

attributed to an unworthy desire of administering to the feelings of a favourite party, or a wish to conciliate the national prejudices of their readers. Though compelled, by the general increase of knowledge, to give a more faithful narrative of facts than the writers of antiquity, when it may suit any of the purposes that have been mentioned, the subject of their biography is seldom dismissed without being made to undergo a sort of purgation in the general estimate of his character, and which is often found to be at antipodes to the actions with which it stands connected. Perhaps the annals of England cannot afford a more striking instance of this perversion of all that is valuable in historical literature, than in the portraits which some historians have drawn of Edward I.

Without attempting to delineate the character of this ambitious disturber of the peace of Britain, the writer will merely notice a few of the leading circumstances of his history, and leave the reader to discover by what curious process of literary chemistry those erudities have been made to harmonize, in order to produce so fair a display of political sagacity and kingly greatness.

The littleness which appears to have been inherent in the mind of Edward, was laid open to the Londoners in 1263, by his breaking into the treasury of the Knights Templars, and carrying off £1000 deposited there by the citizens. This robbery was looked upon by the people as an act so thoroughly base, that they instantly flew to arms, and assaulted the houses of those among the nobility who were supposed accessory to the theft. Edward was, at this time, in his 26th year; of course, youthful indiscretion cannot be advanced as an excuse for the crime.

His cruel and unjust aggression upon Scotland has been indulgently placed to the account of those enlightened and statesman-like views which he entertained of the true interests and general welfare of Britain, and the advantages he discovered would result from the resources of the two countries being consolidated under one head. This *raison of state* has been held up in extenuation of the nefarious means which he resorted to for the accomplishment of his purpose. But by the extracts we are about to make from the pages of an author every way

inclined to treat the faults of Edward with lenity, the intelligent reader will perceive, that though the enlightened views *which he took of the solid interests of his kingdom*, may have found a place in the imagination of the historian, they do not appear to have occurred to the monarch. The extinction of every thing like rational liberty, and the establishment of an extensive and uncontrollable autocracy, seem to have been the undisguised objects of his ambition. In proof of which, we have only to refer to his demeanour towards his barons, and the unwarrantable appropriation of the effects of his subjects, mentioned in the extracts alluded to. His conduct in respect to Scotland being thus stripped of the only palliation that can be offered, it stands forward in the page of history in all its deformity, unrelieved by one solitary extenuating circumstance, while the following transaction gives it, if possible, a darker and more disgusting complexion.

In 1267, Henry and Prince Edward, being driven to the greatest extremity by the Earl of Gloucester and other barons, whom their oppressions and unlawful exactions had forced to take up arms, when every hope failed them, and even the Tower of London was besieged by a numerous army of enraged assailants, they were very opportunely relieved from their perilous situation, by the assistance of thirty thousand Scots, whom Alexander sent to their relief: and with these auxiliaries they were enabled to withstand, and afterwards to subdue, their exasperated and refractory subjects. The debt of gratitude which was thus incurred, Edward had not an opportunity of discharging, till after the death of Alexander, when the Scots, with a generous confidence, which their own conduct naturally inspired, applied to him to act as umpire in settling the succession to the crown. How honourably he acquitted himself in the discharge of the duties of the trust reposed in him, and how generous was the return he made for their good offices, we have already seen. Two nations, who had for nearly a century regarded each other with feelings of mutual good-will, and had lived in a state of friendly intercourse highly beneficial to both, were suddenly transformed into the most inveterate enemies; and an implacable spirit of enmity engendered between them

which it required the slow revolution of ages to soften and obliterate. The guilty ambition of this short-sighted tyrant entailed upon the British states a quarrel the most bloody, the most expensive, and the most insane that, perhaps, ever existed between two nations. By the ridiculous pretensions of the one, the improvement of both countries was retarded, and their frontier populations demoralized into cut-throats and plunderers, who wandered in search of their prey over a land barren as the desert, which might otherwise have been teaming with the fruits of honest and profitable industry.

Edward's idea of honesty we have already seen in the affair of the Templars, and his feelings of gratitude in his conduct towards the Scots. His sense of justice may be gathered from his proceedings against the Jews. The silver pennies of the realm having been clipped, the offence was traced to some of that unfortunate race, and in one day two hundred and eighty of both sexes, were executed in London, besides a great many more in different parts of the kingdom, where it seems simultaneous measures had been taken against them. That this crime was confined entirely to the Jews is not likely. The implements by which it could be committed were certainly not beyond the reach of English intellect; nor could the latter be supposed, in every instance, superior to the temptation which the gains presented. That the guilt of all who suffered was certain is impossible; and a wholesale butchery of this kind, authorized by law, as it could not answer the end of justice, can only be considered as gratuitously administering to the worst of human passions.

The estimation in which Edward held those arts which are calculated to instruct, to refine, and to elevate the human mind, may be learned from his treatment of the minstrels of Wales. The remorseless and sanguinary policy which suggested the unhallowed act, would only have found place in the breast where every virtuous and honourable feeling had disappeared before the withering influence of a selfish and detestable ambition. In an age when the minstrel's profession was a passport to the presence and protection of the great, and the persons of those who exercised the calling were held sacred even among tribes the least removed from barbarism, the mind

must have reached a fearful state of depravity, that could break through those barriers with which the gratitude and veneration of mankind had surrounded the children of genius, and thus immolate at the shrine of a heartless despotism, the innocent and meritorious depositories of a nation's lore.

The reader may form some idea of the treasures squandered by Edward in the Scottish wars, when we state that, according to the Wardrobe Accounts for the year 1300, these wars cost England £32,820 15s. 3½d. According to Bishop Fleetwood, the value of money, in 1300, was thrice as much as in 1700, while the value of certain provisions in the former year was five times as cheap as in the latter; from which comparison, Sir John Sinclair calculates, that the Scottish wars, in the year 1300, cost England the enormous sum of £492,311 9s. 4½d, as money was valued in 1700. The military operations of that year were not on a more expensive scale than those connected with the preceding and subsequent invasions.—That the expenses of this campaign pressed hard on the English treasury, is sufficiently obvious, from the singular expedients which were resorted to for the purpose of carrying it on. The year 1300 is remarkable for the first attempt to depreciate the currency of the kingdom, it having been then ordered that 243 pennies should be coined out of the pound of silver, in place of 240, as formerly. In this year also, as may be seen from the same accounts, the Wardrobe department was in arrears to the amount of £5,949 4s. 3d., which circumstance—taken in connection with the fact, that Sir Simon Fraser and the other knights soon after deserted the English service, because their pay and other allowances were withheld—proves that the treasury of Edward must have been in a very depressed state at this time. This profitless expenditure was continued, with very little interruption, from 1296, till 1320, in pursuit of an object, which, happily, for the future prosperity of both countries, was found to be unattainable.

We have already alluded to the treacherous designs of Edward, regarding the liberties of his own subjects; and in illustration of the opinion then expressed, we shall now subjoin the account of his behaviour, after his triumphant return from the north, as it appears in the pages of Doctor Lingard, an author who certainly does not pretend to be a friend to Scotland:—we wish we could call him a *candid* adversary.

“Had Edward,” says this learned, though often disingenuous writer, “confined his rapacity to the clergy, he might perhaps have continued to despise their remonstrances; but the aids which he had annually raised on the freeholders, the tollages which he had so frequently demanded of the cities and boroughs, and the additional duties which he extorted from the merchants, had excited a general spirit of discontent. Wool and hides were the two great articles of commerce; the exportation of which were allowed only to foreign merchants, and confined, by law, to eleven ports in England, and three in Ireland. In the beginning of his reign, the duty had been raised to half a mark on each sack of wool; but the royal wants perpetually increased; and, during his quarrel with the King of France, he required five marks for every sack of fine, three for every sack of coarse wool, and five for every last of hides. On one occasion, he extorted from the merchants a loan of the value of all the wool which they exported; on two others, he seized and sold both wool and hides for his own profit. He even stretched his rapacious hands to the produce of the soil, and the live stock of his subjects; and, to provision his army in Guienne, he issued precepts to each sheriff, to collect, by assessment on the landholders of his county, a certain number of cattle, and two thousand quarters of wheat. Though this requisition was accompanied by a promise of future payment, the patience of the nation was exhausted: consultations began to be held; and preparations were made for resistance. Edward had assembled two bodies of troops, with one of which he intended to sail for Flanders—the other he destined to reinforce the army in Guienne (1297, February 24). At Salisbury, he gave the command of the latter to Bohun, Earl of Hereford, the constable, and to Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, the Mareschal of England; but both these no-

blamed refused the appointment, on the alleged ground, that, by their office, they were bound only to attend on the king's person. Edward, in a paroxysm of rage, addressing himself to the *mareschal*, exclaimed, 'By the everlasting God, Sir Earl, you shall go or hang'—'By the everlasting God, Sir King,' replied Bigod, 'I will neither go nor hang.' Hereford and Norfolk immediately departed: they were followed by thirty bannerets, and fifteen hundred knights; and the royal officers, intimidated by their menaces, ceased to levy their purveyance. Edward saw that it was necessary to dissemble; and summoned some, and requested others, of his military tenants, to meet him in arms in London.

"The two Earls, in concert with the Archbishop of Canterbury, had arranged their plan of resistance to the royal exactions. On the appointed day the constable, and John de Segrave, as deputy marshal (Bigod himself was detained at home by sickness,) attended the king's court; but when they were required to perform their respective duties (July 8th), they returned a refusal in writing, on the ground that they had not received a legal summons, but only a general invitation. Edward appointed a new constable and marshal, and, to divide and weaken his opponents, sought to appease the clergy, and to move the commiseration of the people, (July 11). He received the primate with kindness, ordered the restoration of his lands, and named him one of the council to Prince Edward, whom he had appointed regent. On a platform before the entrance of Westminster Hall, accompanied by his son, the Archbishop, and the Earl of Warwick, he harrangued the people, (July 14). He owned that the burdens he had laid on them were heavy; but protested that it had not been less painful to him to impose, than it had been to them to bear them. Necessity was his only apology. His object had been to protect himself and his liege men from the cruelty and rapacity of the Welsh, the Scots, and the French, who not only sought *his* crown, but also thirsted after *their* blood. In such case it were better to sacrifice a part than to lose the whole. 'Behold,' he concluded, 'I am going to expose myself to danger for you. If I return, receive me again, and I will make you amends; If I fall, here is my son; place him on the throne, and his grati-

tude shall reward your fidelity.' At these words the King burst into tears; the archbishop was equally affected; the contagion ran through the multitude; and shouts of loyalty and approbation persuaded Edward that he might still depend on the allegiance of his people. This exhibition was followed by writs to the sheriffs, ordering them to protect the clergy from injury, and to maintain them in the possession of their lands.

"He now ventured to proceed as far as Winchelsea, on his way to Flanders. But here he was alarmed by reports of the designs of his opponents, and ordered letters to be sent to every county, stating the origin of his quarrel with the two earls, asserting that he had never refused any petition for redress, and promising to confirm the charter of liberties, and the charter of the forests, in return for the liberal aid of an eighth, which had been granted by the council in London. Soon after, a paper was put into his hands, purporting to be the remonstrance of the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and priors, the earls, barons, and whole commonalty of England. In it they complained that the last summons had been worded ambiguously; that it called on them to accompany the king to Flanders—a country in which they were not bound to serve by the custom of their tenures; that even if they were, they had been so impoverished by aids, tollages, and unlawful seizures, as to be unable to bear the expense; that the liberties granted to them by the two charters had been repeatedly violated; that the 'evil toll' (the duty) annually on wool amounted alone to one-fifth of the whole income of the land; and that to undertake an expedition to Flanders in the existing circumstances was imprudent, since it would expose the kingdom without protection to the inroads of the Welsh and Scots. Edward replied, that he could return no answer on matters of such high importance, without the advice of his council, a part of which had already sailed for Flanders; that if the remonstrants would accompany him, he would accept it as a favour; if they refused, he trusted they would raise no disturbance during his absence (Aug. 19). Before his departure, he appointed commissioners in each county, with powers to require security from all persons for the payment of aids due to the crown, and

the disturbers of the peace, and such of the clergy as might presume to pronounce censures against the royal officers for the discharge of their duty.

“At length the king set sail, accompanied by the barons and knights who had espoused his cause; and two days later, Bohun and Bigod, with a numerous retinue, proceeded to the Exchequer. The constable, in the presence of the treasurer and judges, complained of the king's extortions, of his illegal seizures of private property, and of the enormous duty imposed upon wool; and forbade them, in the name of the baronage of England, to levy the last eighth which had been granted by the great council, because it had been voted without his knowledge and concurrence, and that of his friends. From the exchequer, they rode to Guildhall, where they called upon the citizens to join in the common cause, and to aid in wresting the confirmation of the national liberties from a reluctant and despotic sovereign. The tears which the Londoners had shed, during Edward's harangue, were now dried up; considerations of interest suppressed the impulse of pity; and they gave assurance of their co-operation to the barons, who immediately retired to their respective counties. Both during their progress to the capital, and their return from it, they had marched in military array. But at the same time, they had been careful to preserve the peace; and had threatened, by proclamation, to punish every lawless aggressor with immediate amputation of a hand, or the loss of the head, according to the quality of the offence.

“The king was soon informed of these proceedings, and ordered the barons of the exchequer to disregard the prohibition. But in a few weeks his obstinacy was subdued by a succession of untoward events. The people and clergy universally favoured the cause of the earls: the Scots, after their victory at Stirling, had burst into the northern counties; and Edward himself lay at Ghent, in Flanders, unable to return to the protection of the kingdom, and too weak to face the superior force of the French king. In these circumstances, the lords, who composed the council of the young prince, invited the archbishop, six prelates, twenty-three abbots and priors, the constable and mareschal, and eight barons, to treat with them on matters of the greatest moment; and sum-

moned a parliament to meet in London a week later (Sept. 30), and witness the confirmation of the two charters. In the conferences which preceded, the two parties, though opposed in appearance, had the same interests and the same views; a form of peace (so it was called) was speedily arranged; and, to the ancient enactments of the charters, were appended the following most important additions:—‘No tollage or aid shall henceforth be laid or levied by us or our heirs in this our realm, without the good-will and common assent of the archbishop, bishops, and other prelates, the earls, barons, knights, burgesses, and other freemen in our realm. No officer of us, or our heirs, shall take corn, wool, hides, or other goods, of any person whatever, without the good-will and assent of the owner of such goods. Nothing shall henceforth be taken on the sack of wool, under the name or pretence of the evil toll. We also will and grant for us, and our heirs, that all both clergy and laity of our realm shall have their laws, liberties, and free customs, as freely and wholly as at any one time when they had them best; and if any statutes have been made, or customs introduced, by us or our ancestors contrary to them, or to any article in the present charter, we will and grant that such statutes be null and void for ever. We have moreover, remitted to the Earl Constable and Earl Mareschal, and all their associates, and to all those who have not accompanied us to Flanders, all rancour and ill-will, and all manner of offences which they may have committed against us, or ours, before the making of this present charter. And for the greater assurance of this thing, we will and grant for us, and our heirs, that all archbishops and bishops in England for ever, shall, twice in the year, after the reading of this charter in their cathedral churches, excommunicate, and cause, in their parochial churches, to be excommunicated, all those that knowingly shall do, or cause to be done, any thing against the tenor, force, and effect, of any article contained in it.’

“When the parliament assembled (Oct. 10), these additions to the charter were received with enthusiasm; and provided the king would assent to them, the laity voted him an eighth, the clergy of Canterbury a tenth, and the clergy of York a fifth. The prince by a public

instrument, took the earls and their associates under his protection, and the lords of the council bound themselves to indemnify them against the effects of the royal displeasure. A common letter was written to the king, soliciting him to appease all differences by giving his assent, and assuring him that his faithful barons were ready at his command either to join him in Flanders, or to march against his enemies in Scotland; but at the same time requiring, in a tone of defiance, an answer against the sixth day of December. It cost the haughty mind of Edward several struggles, before he could prevail on himself to submit; three days were spent in useless deliberation and complaints; but at last, with a reluctant hand, he signed the confirmation of the two charters with the additional articles, and a separate pardon for the Earls and their followers, (Nov. 5).

“This was perhaps the most important victory which had hitherto been gained over the crown. By investing the people with the sole right of raising the supplies, it armed them with the power of checking the extravagance, and controlling the despotism of their monarchs. Whatever jealousy might be entertained of Edward’s intentions, his conduct wore at first the semblance of sincerity. As soon as an armistice had been concluded between him and the king of France, he returned to England, and appointed commissioners to inquire into the illegal seizures which had been made previously to his departure. They were to be divided into two classes. Where the officers acted without warrant, they were, at their own cost, to indemnify the sufferers; where the goods had been taken by the royal orders, their value was to be certified into the exchequer, and prompt payment was to be made. Still it was suspected that he only waited for a favourable moment to cancel the concessions which had been wrung from him by necessity; and it was whispered that among his confidential friends, he had laughed at them as being of no force, because they had been made in a foreign country, where he possessed no authority. When he met his parliament at York, the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk required that he should ratify his confirmation of the charters. He objected from the necessity of hastening to oppose the Scots, solemnly promised to comply with their request on his return, and brought forward the Bishop of

Durham and three Earls, who swore 'on his sou!' that he should fulfil his engagements." 1299, March, "The victory of Falkirk and a long series of success gave a lustre to his arms; but when the parliament assembled next year, the king was reminded of his promise. His reluctance employed every artifice to defeat the vigilance, or exhaust the patience of the two earls. He retired from the parliament in anger; he returned and proposed modifications; at last he ratified his former concessions, but with the addition of a clause, which, by saving the rights of the crown, virtually annulled every provision in favour of the subject. Bohun and Bigod instantly departed with their adherents; and the king, to ascertain the sentiments of the people, ordered the sheriffs to assemble the citizens in the cemetery of St. Paul's, and to read to them the new confirmation of the charters. The lecture was repeatedly interrupted by shouts of approbation; but when the illusory clause was recited, the air rung with expressions of discontent, and curses were poured on the head of the prince, who had thus disappointed the expectations of his people. Edward took the alarm; summoned a new parliament to meet him within a fortnight, granted every demand; and appointed a commission of three bishops, three earls, and three barons, to ascertain the real boundaries of the royal forests."

We are also informed by the learned doctor, that at one time Edward held up the Scots as an object of terror to his subjects, in order to secure their acquiescence with his oppressive demands; and two months later, the English in turn are making the same use of the Scots, for the purpose of extorting from their reluctant and unprincipled sovereign the confirmation of their mutual liberties. It did not, however, appear to strike them that the subversion of freedom in Scotland was totally inconsistent with its existence in the southern part of the island.

Dr. Lingard also says, that after the surrender of Stirling castle in 1304, Edward sent a secret deputation to the pope, craving that a dispensation might be granted him from the oaths he had taken. This request appears to have been complied with; but the learned author adds, "Whether the papal rescript did not fully meet the king's wishes, or that he was intimidated by the rebellion of the

Scots, he made no public use of its contents: but suffered the concessions, galling as they were, to remain on the statute-roll at his death, and descend to future sovereigns as the recognised law of the land. Thus, after a long struggle, was won, from an able and powerful monarch, the most valuable of the privileges enjoyed by the commons of England at the present day. If we are indebted to the patriotism of Cardinal Langton, and the barons at Runnymede, the framers of the great charter, we ought equally to revere the memory of Archbishop Winchelsea and the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk. The former erected barriers against the abuse of the sovereign authority; the latter fixed the liberties of the subject on a sure and permanent foundation." Not so very sure, we presume, when, by one word of the pope, it was liable to be overturned; but in his list of meritorious characters, Sir William Wallace and his followers ought not to have been omitted by the learned author, as they, while nobly battling for the independence of their own country, were also instrumental in securing such invaluable and lasting privileges for their neighbours.

From the evidence adduced in the quotations made, of the powerful diversion effected in favour of English liberty by the stubborn opposition of the Scots, it appears, that the success of the arms of the latter was the palladium on which the most important of England's chartered rights depended. When the people of England therefore, think of erecting monuments to the characters Dr. Lingard has enumerated, it is to be hoped that a tablet to the memory of the Knight of Elderslie will not be forgotten, on which, with propriety, may be inscribed,

*LIBERTE' CHERIE, quand tu meurs en Ecosse,
Certes, l'Anglais, chez lui, peut bien creuser ta fosse,"*

NOTES.

WALLACE'S TREE.—TORWOOD.

THE following memoranda respecting this celebrated tree will perhaps be acceptable to the reader—:

“In Dunipace parish is the famous Torwood, in the middle of which there are the remains of Wallace's Tree, an oak, which according to measurement when entire, was said to be about twelve feet in diameter. To this wood Wallace is said to have fled, and secreted himself in the body of that tree, then hollow, after his defeat in the north,”—*Stat. Acc.*

“This oak is still dignified by the name of *Wallace's Tree*. It stands in the middle of a swampy moss, having a causeway round its ruins; and its destruction has been much precipitated, by the veneration in which the Scottish hero has been long held; numerous pieces have been carried off, to be converted into various memorials of the Champion of Scotland.”—*Kerr's Hist. of Bruce*.

“Wallace's Oak, as it has been called for ages, still remains in the Torwood near Stirling. The old tradition of the country bears, that Sir William Wallace, after a lost battle, secreted himself in this tree, and escaped the pursuit of his enemies. By this account, it behoved then, that is about 500 years ago, to have been a large tree. Whatever may be its age, it certainly has in its ruins the appearance of greater antiquity than what I have observed in any tree in Scotland.

“At a very remote period it has separated in the middle, and the one half remains, and is in one place

about twenty feet high. But what the tree was above this height, is unknown. All the original part of the tree is putrid. Yet one may perceive from the whole of it, from the head to the very bark, it has been red wood, and is so hard even in its putrid state as to admit of a polish.

"In this ancient Torwood, it stands in a manner alone. For there are no trees, nor any ruin of a tree to be seen that is nearly coeval. Compared to it, even the oldest of them is of a very modern date. The memory of its having saved Wallace, has probably been the means of its preservation, when all the rest of the wood at different times has been destroyed. It has been immemorially held in veneration, and is still viewed in that light.

There is a peculiar sort of renovation of an old tree that sometimes occurs, and has taken place in this. A young bark has shot upwards from the root in several places, which has formed fresh branches towards the top of the old trunk. This young bark has spread, and still spreads, like a callus, over several parts of the old tree that are dead; and particularly over a very large arm, which has had no bark on it in the remembrance of the oldest person alive.

"The tree stands in carse land, in a deep wet clay soil. The road that passes by it in the wood is laid crossways with thick branches of trees, to prevent carriages from sinking to the axles in wet weather."—*Walker's Essays on Natural History* (1771).

"The ground on which this tree stood was elevated above the surrounding level, which appears at one time to have been a sort of swamp. Causeways of a rude construction led up to the oak in different directions; and as the first formation of these causeways is beyond the memory of the oldest inhabitants living, it proves that the sheltering place of the Defender of Scotland must have been an object of deep interest to his countrymen at a very early period. Although this ancient memorial of Wallace measured, in the recollection of people still living, forty-two feet in circumference, not a vestige of it is now to be discovered. The veneration with which it was regarded, secured it from all human interference; and it was left to the winds of heaven, and the hand of time, till it reached that state of decay which indicated an approaching crisis. Its extinction was then hastened

by an anxiety on the part of visitors to possess some portion of it, as a relic of one with whose name it had been so long associated; and so far was this feeling carried, that, after the trunk had disappeared, the ground was dug up to the extent of twelve feet round it, in order to get at any fragment of the root that might chance to remain. This grand search took place after the time was fixed for the visit of George IV. to Scotland (1822); and Mr. Craig, an artist residing at Helensburgh, of considerable taste in his profession, used a part of it, which had then been found, in the formation of a snuff-box, ingeniously composed, besides, of various small pieces of wood, including portions of "the Elderslie Oak," "Queen Mary's Yew," the "Bush abune Traquair," and other celebrated inmates of the forest, which have been consecrated by the historical and poetical muse of Scotland. This elegant little national gem was, with much propriety, presented to, and graciously accepted by his majesty, during his residence in Scotland. Thus, after a lapse of ages, the root of that oak which had preserved the houseless patriot, when outlawed by the enemies of his country, has, by a strange vicissitude, been transplanted to the personal possession of the legitimate descendant of that race of kings for whose right he so nobly contended, and whose beloved representative now wields a sceptre over a countless accumulation of subjects, and a dominion from which the sun may be said never to withdraw his light.

"In the preceding year, at the depth of a foot from the surface, and about thirty feet west of Wallace's-tree, the head of an ancient Scottish spear was found, which was presented to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, by Mr. Alexander Kincaid. It measures eight inches in length, and, if not of higher antiquity, was probably one of those used in the fatal conflict, which took place in the Torwood, between James III. and his nobles in 1488."

—*Carrick.*

"The Torwood, an ancient and extensive forest, in the neighbourhood of which Wallace passed the years of his youth, and whose dark and then almost impenetrable recesses often afforded him an asylum, when pursued by his enemies. In this forest, altered and curtailed in its dimensions as it must be, by the lapse of so many centu-

ries, the memory of the patriot is as fresh as when he rose in resistance against Edward. Many years have not passed since the relics of an immense and aged oak within whose excavated trunk he had concealed himself, were pointed out to the traveller; and a youthful tree, which has been planted on the spot, is still fondly visited. Thomas Walker, an intelligent and respectable mason, who lives on the spot, informs me that, when he measured the decayed trunk of Wallace's oak, in 1785, it was forty-five feet in circumference."—*Tytler*.

WALLACE'S EXPEDITION TO THE WEST HIGHLANDS—(CHAP. 7).

The expedition of Wallace to Loch Awe has engaged the attention of John Hay Allan, Esq., a gentleman of talent and intelligence, who has handled the subject with no small degree of acumen, as the following subject will show :—

"Blind Harry has very particularly related the circumstances of MacFadyan's proceedings; and the account so exactly coincides with the tradition and topography of the district where the facts are said to have been performed, that there can be little or no doubt of the truth of his narration.

"Loch Awe, upon the banks of which the scene of action took place, is thirty-four miles in length. The north side is bounded by wild ruins and inconsiderable hills, which occupy an extent of country from twelve to twenty miles in breadth, and the whole of this space is enclosed as by a circumvallation. Upon the north it is barred by Loch Etive, on the south by Loch Awe, and on the east, by the deep and dreadful pass of Brandir, through which an arm of the latter lake opens, at about four miles from its eastern extremity, and discharges the river Awe into the former. The pass is about three miles in length; its east side is bounded by the almost inaccessible steeps which form the base of the vast and rugged mountain of Cruachan. The crags rise, in some places, almost perpendicularly from the water; and, for their

chief extent, show no space nor level at their feet, but a rough and narrow edge of stony beach. Upon the whole of these cliffs grew a thick and interwoven wood of all kinds of trees, both timber, dwarf, and coppice; no track existed through the wilderness, but a winding path, which sometimes crept along the precipitous height, and sometimes descended in a straight pass along the margin of the water. Near the extremity of the defile, a narrow level opened between the water and the crag; but a great part of this, as well as the preceding steeps, was formerly enveloped in a thicket, which showed little facility to the feet of any but the martins and wild cats.— Along the west side of the pass lies a wall of sheer and barren crags: from behind, they rise in rough, uneven, heathy declivities, out of the wild muir before mentioned, between Loch Etive and Loch Awe; but in front they terminate abruptly in the most frightful precipices, which form the whole side of the pass, and descend at one fall into the water which fills its trough. At the north end of this barrier, and at the termination of the pass, lies that part of the cliff which is called Craiganuni: at its foot the arm of the lake gradually contracts its water to a very narrow space, and at length terminates at two rocks (called the rocks of Brandir), which form a straight channel, something resembling the lock of a canal. From this outlet there is a continual descent towards Loch Etive, and from hence the river Awe pours out its current in a furious stream, foaming over a bed broken with holes, and cumbered with masses of granite and whinstone.

“If ever there was a bridge near Craiganuni in ancient times it must have been at the rocks of Brandir. From the days of Wallace, to those of General Wade, there were never passages of this kind; but in places of great necessity, too narrow for a boat, and too wide for a leap, even then they were but an unsafe footway, formed of trees placed transversely from rock to rock, unstripped of their bark, and destitute of either plank or rail. For such a structure there is no place in the neighbourhood of Craiganuni, but at the rocks above mentioned. In the lake, and on the river, the water is far too wide; but, at the strait, the space is not greater than might be crossed by a tall man. That this point was always a place of

passage, is rendered probable by its facility, and the use of recent times. It is not long since it was the common gate of the country, on either side the river and the pass. The mode of crossing is yet in the memory of people living, and was performed by a little currach moored on either side of the water, and a stout cable fixed across the stream from bank to bank, by which the passengers drew themselves across, in the manner still practised in places of the same nature. It is no argument against the existence of a bridge in former times, that the above method only existed in ours, rather than a passage of that kind which might seem the more improved expedient. The contradiction is sufficiently accounted for, by the decay of timber in the neighbourhood. Of old, both oaks and firs of an immense size abounded within a very inconsiderable distance; but it is now many years since the destruction of the forests of Glen Etive, and Glen Urcha has deprived the country of all the trees of a sufficient size to cross the strait of Brandir; and it is probable, that the currach was not introduced till the want of timber had disenabled the inhabitants of the country, from maintaining the bridge. It now only further remains to be noticed, that at some distance below the rock of Brandir, there was formerly a ford, which was used for cattle in the memory of people yet living. From the narrowness of the passage, the force of the stream, and the broken bed of the river, it was, however, a dangerous pass, and could only be attempted with safety at leisure and by experience.

“Such is the topography of the country in which tradition says, that, Sir Neil Campbell made his retreat and refuge. It now remains to show what correspondence there is between its features, and the relation given by Blind Harry. The words of the Minstrel are as follows:—

‘ Ye knyght Cambell maid guid defens for yi
 Till *Craigunyn* with thre hunder he zeld,
 Yat strenth he held for all his (MacFadyan's) cruel deed
 Syne brak ye *bryg* quhar yal mycht not out pass,
 Bot through a *furd* quhar narow passage was
 Abandounly Cambell agayne yaim baid
 Fast upon *Avis* yat was baith deep and braid,
 Makfadyan was apon ye toyir syd,
 And yar on force behuffyt hym for to byd,

For at ye furd *he durst nocht* entir out,
 For gud Cambell mycht *set hym yan in dout,*
 Makfadhan socht, and a small passage fand
 Had he lasar he mycht pass off yat land
 Betwix a roch and ye gret waltir syd
 But four in frount na ma mycht gang or ryd.'

"The correspondence between the above description and the account I have before given of the topography of the Pass of Brandir, must be evident to every examiner. But the identity of that place, and the one mentioned in the poem, is confirmed to a degree of certainty; first, by the fact, that such a correspondence can be found in no other part of the neighbouring district; and secondly, by the mention which is made in the description of the poem, of names which *now* exist in the appellation of the place to which it is supposed to apply. 'Avis' is well known to have been the ancient name of Loch Awe, and is often met with in old poems which make mention of that lake; and Craigunyn is clearly but a mis-spelling of Craganuni, the names of the rocks at the extremity of the Pass of Brandir. The error is merely owing to the ignorance of the transcribers of the poem, who did not understand Gaelic orthography. Except by persons very competently masters of the language of the country, there is scarcely a name in the Highlands more correctly written at the present day.

"It is easy to show the solecism of the correspondence between Blind Harry's description of the position of Sir Neil, and the topography of the Pass of Brandir. In the sixth line of the passage above quoted, it is said, that when the Campbell had gained the crag to which he retreated, he 'laid' (abode) fast upon Loch Avis. From whence it is plain that this post was immediately above the shore of Loch Awe. In the brief notices of MacFadyen's situation at the same period, it is equally evident, that he was entangled in a narrow and dangerous pass, bounded on one side by rocks, and on the other side by the lake. It is expressly said that he was on the opposite side from the Campbells. The water was then between them, and yet their positions were communicable by a bridge and a ford. In the whole sixty-eight miles, which form the circuit of Loch Awe, there is not a spot where these circumstances could have existed except in the Pass of Brandir. On

no part of the shore is there a pass of the nature and difficulty implied in Blind Harry's notices of MacFadyan's embarrassment except there. Neither is there any part of the lake which could be interposed between two bodies of men, and yet rendered evadable by a bridge, except the arm which terminates the river Awe. In all other places the water is from one to three miles wide, and does not contract into any stream or inlet which could prolong its barrier sufficiently to prevent it from being turned, and yet admit of its being evaded by a passage of the nature above-mentioned. But in the Pass of Brandir all these particulars are identically to be traced. The narrowing of the lake to an inconsiderable channel, and its prolongation into the river Awe, by which the former might be interposed as a barrier, and yet evaded by an immediate crossing; the bridge mentioned by Blind Harry, as having existed at the foot of Craignyn, and the probability that one formerly did exist in the corresponding spot of Craiganuni; the ford described as having been the only remaining communication in the separating water, its dangerous character, and the actual being of a pass of the same nature, and the same relative position in the water of Awe, all give the strongest evidence of the truth of the Minstrel's relation, and the application of the scene which he has described. Having then established so much from the circumstances of the poem, and the nature of the country, we may draw a clear deduction of the proceedings and motives of Sir Neil Campbell previous to his entering Craiganuni.

“Allowing that this spot was the place to which that chief retreated from MacFadyan, it follows as a necessary consequence, from the situation of the latter at the breaking of the bridge, that he must have made his pursuit round the east end of Loch Awe; and it will very clearly appear that he could not have chosen this direction, had he not been enticed into it by a similar route in the flight of the Campbell. The proof that MacFadyan did take the direction which I have advanced is sufficiently decisive.* * * * Drawn after him by the consciousness of superiority, and the facility of the pursuit, the Irish captain followed him with no thought but the eagerness of his capture.

“Thus baffled and out-manceuvred, MacFadyan not only failed in his object of offence, but found himself drawn into an intricate and desolate labyrinth, where his multitude encumbered themselves; the want of subsistence prevented him from remaining to blockade Sir Neil, and his ignorance of the clues of the place made it difficult to extricate himself by a retreat. At length he discovered a passage between the rocks and the water; the way was only wide enough for four persons to pass abreast; yet as they were not in danger of pursuit, they retired in safety, and effected their march to the south side of the lake.

Here we must leave MacFadyan, and return to Duncan of Lorn. In his youth the latter had been a school-companion of Wallace at Dundee, and he now determined to resort to him, and make use of their old acquaintance to prevail on the champion of Scotland to come to the assistance of Sir Neil Campbell. As soon therefore, as MacFadyan had evacuated the pass, Duncan descended from Craiganubi, and pursued his way for the Low country, attended only by a single follower, named Gil'emichel. His faithful clansman was an aged man, but even in his age was still famous for his uncommon speed of foot, and on their return, performed good service for his master. When Duncan arrived in the Low country he found the Wallace at Dundaff, with Sir John the Graeme. The patriot chieftain had just returned from the overthrow of the English in the Barns of Ayr and the city of Glasgow; and besides the friends and forces who had come to him upon these occasions he had been joined by Malcolm Earl of Lennox, and Richard of Lundy, who brought with them a considerable number of their followers. No sooner had Wallace heard the tidings, than he resolved to go to the aid of Sir Neil Campbell; and assembling his force, he instantly set out upon his march. He directed his course by Stirling, either to gather increase of followers, or apprehensive of leaving behind him an English garrison on the threshold of the Highlands. The castle, however, was not a place to be taken in a day; and bent upon the destruction of MacFadyan, Wallace would not delay his march to pursue the siege in person, but, leaving the Earl of Lennox to carry on that service, he determined to push

forward his expedition into Argyleshire. Having assembled his forces at the bridge of Stirling, and found them to amount to two thousand men, 'worthi and wycht,' he hastened forward on his way. Duncan of Lorn acted as his guide; and while they pursued their march, he sent forward his man Gillemichel to discover intelligence of the enemy. Blind Harry proceeds to relate, that as the army proceeded, it became fatigued with its march, that a great part of the men and horses were incapable to continue their way with that speed which the urgency of the expedition required. Upon this Wallace determined to divide the weary from the strong, and to hasten forward with the latter only and surprise the enemy, before they could have the opportunity of choosing a position where the superiority of their numbers could be displayed to its advantage. For this purpose he divided his host into two bodies; the first, consisting of seven hundred men, he chose to hasten forward with himself; and the second, which contained but five hundred, and which was spent with fatigue, he left in the rear to follow as they might. Before they continued their march, Wallace again separated the first division into three companies; the first, consisting of one hundred men, his own chosen west country veterans, he led in person as the advance guard; the second, of the same number, he committed to Sir John the Graeme; and the last, to the amount of five hundred, he gave to Richard of Lundi, with whom he joined Wallace of Richardtown, his cousin. After this disposition the two grand divisions separated: that under Wallace hastened forward on its march, and crossing the mountain in their front, lost sight of their feeble comrades. In Glen Dochart they were met by Gillemichel the scout, with him came Sir Neil Campbell, who had escaped from Craiganuni, and at the head of his three hundred clansmen had hastened to join the approaching aid of Wallace."

"The mention which Blind Harry makes of the march of Wallace, after the separation from his weary men, agrees very much with this path, (Rad mor an riht,) and its direction.

* Yes Wallace ost began to tak ye hycht,
Owr a montayne sane passit off yar sycht.

In Glendowchar yair spy met yaim agayne
With lord Cambell, yan was our folk rycht & ync.'

"The correspondence is made still more near by the hint which is given of the spot where the men of Wallace met Sir Neil Campbell. It appears to have happened immediately upon their entering Glen Dochart; and after having described the meeting of the two parties, when the Minstrel tells us, that they resumed their march, he says—

'By Louth dochyr full sodynle yaim drew.'

"From this it would appear that Wallace entered the glen near the extremity of the lake, and this is the exact point where the mountain path enters from Loth Earn.

"From this period of the poem to the conclusion of the episode of MacFadyan, the relation of the Minstrel is clear and consistent; and by the aid of the tradition of the country, the route pursued by Wallace may be well identified with the localities of its ancient topography.

"A short distance beyond the west end of Glen Dochart, there is a high and wide tract of moss and moor, called 'The Churay Beag,' which occupies the most considerable extent of the space between Glen Dochart and Glen Urcha; the entrance to Loch Awe. It is difficult to conceive a more desolate spot, nor one which could more correspond with the moss noticed by Blind Harry. Its whole extent is a vast waste of swamps, gullies, and broken peat-hags; and its outlets and entrances are by rugged and steep declivities, embarrassed with fragments of rocks, and torn into vast chasms by the torrents which rise on the moss above. Through this miserable region lies the shortest path from Glen Dochart to Glen Urcha; and though impassable for horses, yet, in the olden time, when they were little used by the Highlanders, it was the most common thoroughfare between the above mentioned places, and is still used on account of its brevity, by the shepherds of the country, and foot travellers who require expedition. It is several miles shorter than the way by Strath Millan and Glen Lochie; for this reason, and also for its utter solitude, it is highly probable that it should have been the route chosen by Wallace in preference to the other. In addition to the proofs offered in

its favour, by the correspondence of its features with those of the road mentioned by Blind Harry, there is the negative confirmation, that no place of the same nature occurs within the neighbourhood of Glen Dochart, in any direction, by which it is propable that the march of Wallace could have been destined. For this reason, it is impossible that he could have passed through Strath Fillan; for in the whole way from Glen Dochart to Glen Urcha by that road, there is neither moss nor muir, but plain strath and narrow glen. But to return to the relation of the minstrel.

“ Previous to the entrance of Wallace on the muir, he mentions that Gillemichel had been again sent forward to reconnoitre the route. He had not been long entered the moss; when he met a scout of MacFadyan, doubtless sent to discover the approach of Wallace. At the appearance of Gillemichel the foeman fled; but his speed was not sufficient to outstrip the fleet foot of his pursuer, and he was overtaken and slain. Delivered from this danger of discovery, the host of Wallace effected their march through the Churan in perfect secrecy, and reached the hold of MacFadyan before their approach was even known. It may, perhaps, be remembered, that the paucity of the Minstrel, in his relation of this part of the march of Wallace, is inconsistent with the description of the country through which tradition supposes it to have been made; since the poem makes no mention of the progress of the expedition through the intermediate space of ten miles, which lies between the Churan and the Pass of Brandir, but, from declaring Wallace’s delivery from the moss, immediately proceeds to communicate his entrance to the hold, without taking any notice of his arrival on the shore of Loch Awe. But, it is to be observed, that through the whole march of Wallace, it describes those situations only, the circumstances of which, affect the incidents of the story. The space from the Churan being destitute of any feature, dangerous or advantageous, and the grand interest of the episode, being the hold of MacFadyan; the Minstrel appears to have been absorbed in that object, and to have passed without regard, the intervening way. This is probably the fact, by the certain evidence, that, wherever the post of MacFadyan was situated, there was between its en-

trance and the moss passed by Wallace, a space of water which has not been mentioned by the Minstrel.

“From the arrival of Wallace in the hold of MacFadyan, the account of Blind Harry corresponds entirely with the account of the oral record, and the nature of the Pass of Brandir. The place in which the old people of the country point out the site of the battle, is that narrowest stripe of open space, which lies near the northern extremity of the pass, between the foot of Cruachan, and the narrowing of the lake to the rock of Brandir. The Minstrel coincides with this account:—

“Endlong ye schoir *ay four* in front yai past,
Quhill yai within assemblyt at ye last.”

“From this narrowness of the column, and the number of Wallace’s men, the whole host could not have entered within the pass, till the head had arrived as far as the space before mentioned. The description of the position also agrees with the Pass of Brandir:—

“Her is na gait to fle zone pepil can,
Bot rockis heich and wattir depe and wan.”

“As soon as the men of Wallace arrived at the post of their enemies, they fell upon them with the utmost fury. Their scouts having been slain, as before mentioned, MacFadyan’s followers were completely surprised and taken at disarray. Undismayed, however, by this ill fortune, they snatched up their arms, and rushed to defend the pass with the boldest resolution. At the first onset, the Scots bore back their enemies over five acres of ground; and Wallace with his iron mace, made a fearful havoc among the enemy. Encouraged, however, by MacFadyan, the Irish came to the rescue; the battle thickened with more stubborn fury, and for two hours was maintained, with such obstinate eagerness on both sides, that neither party had any apparent advantage; and, says the Minstrel, the fiercest found ‘eneuch’ of fighting. At length the cause, and the valour of Wallace, prevailed. The Irish gave way and fled; and the Scots of their party threw down their arms, and kneeling for mercy, Wallace commanded them to be spared for their birth’s sake, but urged forward the pursuit upon the Irish.

Pent in by the rocks and the water, the latter had but little hope in flight. Many were overtaken and slain as they endeavoured to climb the crags; and two thousand were driven into the lake and drowned.—MacFadyan, with fifteen men fled to a cave, and hoped to have concealed himself till the pursuit was over; but Duncan of Lorn having discovered his retreat, pursued and slew him with his companions; and having cut off the head of the leader, brought it to Wallace, and set it upon a stone, high in one of the crags, as a trophy of victory.”

TREACHERY OF MONTEITH—(CHAP. XVII).

Lord Hailes, in his *Annals of Scotland*, has endeavoured to remove the odium which has for upwards of 500 years been attached to the memory of the Judas of Scotland; but his efforts have been unavailing. Dr. Jamieson thus replied to him:—

“The account given of the treachery of Monteith, is one of those points on which Sir D. Dalrymple shows his historical scepticism. He introduces it in language calculated to inspire doubt into the mind of the reader; observing, that ‘the popular tradition is, that his *friend*, Sir John Monteith, betrayed him to the English.’ It is rather strange that he should express himself in this manner, at the very moment that he quotes the *Scotichronicon* on the margin; as if this venerable record, when a modern should be disposed to adopt a theory irreconcilable with its testimony, were entitled to no higher regard than is due to ‘popular tradition.’

“He adds, ‘Sir John Monteith was of high birth, a son of Walter Stewart, Earl of Monteith.’ I can perceive no force in this remark, unless it be meant to imply that there never has been an instance of a man of noble blood acting the part of a traitor.

“But, ‘at this time,’ we are told, ‘the important fortress of Dumbarton was committed to his charge by Edward.’ Here, it would seem, the learned writer fights

the poor Minstrel with his own weapons. For I find no evidence of this fact in the *Fædera*, *Hemingford*, or the *Decem Scriptores*; and Lord Hailes has referred to no authority; so that there is reason to suspect, to use his own language, that he here 'copies' what 'is said by Blind Harry, whom no historian but Sir Robert Sibbald will venture to *quote*.' If Harry's narrative be received as authority, it is but justice to receive his testimony as he gives it. Now, in the preceding part of his work, he represents Monteith as holding the castle of Dumbarton, at least with the consent of Wallace, while acknowledged as governor of Scotland. It would appear, indeed, that the whole district of the Lennox had been intrusted to him.

"But even at this time there was something dubious in the conduct of Monteith. While he retained the castle, the English held the town under Edward. It is perfectly conceivable, that, although it was known to Wallace that Monteith had some secret understanding with the English, this artful man might persuade him that he only wished an opportunity of wreaking the national vengeance on them, or at least of more effectually serving the interest of Wallace when he saw the proper time. Although Wallace had been assured that Monteith had taken an oath of fealty to Edward, he would have had no more reason for distrusting him, than for distrusting by far the greatest part of the nobility and landholders of Scotland, who as they believed, from the necessity of despair, had submitted to the usurper.

John de Monteith is designated by Arnold Blair, *im-munis proditor*; and the writer proceeds to curse him as with bell, book and candle.

Sir David aims another blow at this account, in the following words:—'That he had ever any intercourse of friendship or familiarity with Wallace, I have yet to learn.' But the truth is, the worthy Judge does not seem disposed to *learn* this. It is difficult to say what evidence will satisfy him. The incidental hints, in the poem, in regard to Wallace's connection with Monteith, all perfectly agree with the mournful termination. Such confidence had he in him according to the Minstrel, that he not only resided in Dumbarton Castle for two months while Monteith had the charge of it, but gave orders for

building a house of stone there, apparently that he might enjoy his society.

“But independently of the testimony of Blind Harry, Bower expressly asserts the co-operation of Monteith with Wallace, Graham, and Scrymgeour, in the suppression of the rebellious men of Galloway.

“It is to be observed, that John Major expressly affirms the treachery of Monteith, as acting in concert with Aymer de Valloins, Earl of Pembroke. He says, that Monteith was considered as his (Wallace's) most intimate friend. Now, although he rejects many of the transactions recited by blind Harry, as false, so far is he from insinuating the slightest hesitation as to this business, that he formally starts an objection as to the imprudence of Wallace in not being more careful of his person, and answers it by remarking, that ‘no enemy is more dangerous than a domestic one.’

“It may be added, that Bower expressly asserts that Wallace ‘suspecting no evil, was fraudulently and treacherously seized at Glasgow by Lord John Monteith.’ And he again refers to the treacherous conduct of Monteith towards Wallace, when afterwards relating a similar plan which he had laid for taking King Robert Bruce prisoner, under the pretence of delivering up to him the castle of Dumbarton, on condition of his receiving a hereditary right to the lieutenancy of the Lennox. Now, Bower was born anno 1385. The date assigned to the *Scotichronicon*, as published with his continuation, is 1447, and that to the *Minstrel's Poem*, 1470. It is therefore impossible that Bower could have borrowed the account given of Monteith from Blind Harry. Bower was born, indeed, only eighty or eighty-one years after the fact referred to; and, considering the elevation of the character of Wallace, and the great attachment of his countrymen even to this day, as well as the multitude of his enemies, it is totally inconceivable that any whole nation, learned and unlearned, should concur in imputing this crime to one man, *without* the most valid reasons.”

The treachery of Monteith towards Bruce, alluded to above, is thus mentioned by Buchanan.

“About this time, there happened a passage not unworthy to be related in regard to the variety of providences, in a narrow compass of time. John Monteith,

who betrayed his friend Wallace to the English, and was therefore deservedly hated by the Scots, received, amongst other rewards, the government of Dumbarton castle from the English. When other forts were recovered, that only, or but a very few with it, held out for the English. And because it was naturally impregnable, the king (Robert Bruce) dealt with the governor by his friends and kindred to surrender it. He demanded the county or earldom of Lennox, as the price of his treachery and surrender. Neither would he ever so much as hear of any other terms. In this case the king wavered and fluctuated in his mind what to do. On the one side, he earnestly desired to have the castle; yet, on the other, he did not so much prize it as for its sake to disoblige the Earl of Lennox, who had been his best, and almost only friend in all his calamities. But the Earl of Lennox hearing of it, and coming in, soon decided the controversy, and persuaded the king by all means to accept the conditions. Accordingly the bargain was made as John Monteith would have it, and solemnly confirmed. But when the king was going to take possession of the castle, a carpenter, one Roland, met him in the wood of Colquhoun, about a mile from it; and having obtained liberty to speak with the king, concerning a matter of great importance, he told him what treachery the governor intended against him; nay, and had prepared to execute it. It was this:—In a wine-cellar concealed, and under-ground, a sufficient number of English were hid, who, when the rest of the castle should be given up, and the king secure, were to issue forth upon him as he was at dinner, and either to kill, or take him prisoner. This being thus related, the king, upon the surrender of the other parts of the castle by John, being kindly invited to a feast, refused to eat, till, as he had searched all other parts of the castle; so, he had viewed that wine-cellar also. The governor excused it, pretending that the smith who had the key, was out of the way, but that he would come again anon. The king, not satisfied therewith, caused the door to be broken open, and so the plot was discovered. The Englishmen were brought forth in their armour, and being severally examined, confessed the whole matter; and they added also another discovery, viz., that a ship

rode ready in the next bay to carry the king into England. The accomplices in this wretched design were put to death; but John was kept in prison, because the king was loth to offend his kindred, especially his sons-in-law, in so dangerous a time: for he had many daughters, all of them very beautiful, and married to men rich enough but factious. Therefore in a time of such eminent danger, the battle drawing near wherein all was at stake, lest the mind of any powerful man might be rendered averse from him, and thereby inclined to practise against him, John was released out of prison, upon this condition (for the performance whereof his sons-in-law undertook,) that he should be placed in the front of the battle, and there, by his valour, should await the decision of Providence. And indeed, the man otherwise fraudulent, was in this faithful to the king: for he behaved himself so valiantly, that that day's work procured him not only pardon for what was past, but large rewards for the future."

This last transaction of Monteith is quite consistent with the conduct ascribed to him by the Minstrel; we may also here observe a reason for the impunity which attended his crimes.

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